THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XIII. R. BONNER, { EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 44 ANN-STREET. NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 6, 1858. TERMS, { $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 48.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING.

A ROMANCE OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE ISLAND PRINCESS;" "THE DESERTED WIFE;" &c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PETITION.

> When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
> My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply:
> The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
> Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.
>
> SACRED SONGS.

The petition for respite was drawn up by Mr Wright, read and approved by Mr. Dulanie, and signed by a large number of persons—even by those who, during the trial, had been most denunciatory, but who, since the prisoner was sentenced to death, were the most sympathizing, and also by conscientious persons, who would have refused to put their names to a pardon, but readily signed one for respite.

Mr. Wright undertook the journey to the capital to present the petition to the Executive. It was an affair of several days, which were passed in great anxiety by the unhappy prisoner and his suffering wife. At length, at the end of the week, the messenger returned.

The petition was refused!

The intelligence was communicated to the hapless pair, as they sat together, as usual, in the cell.

"God's will be done!" was the only comment made by Mr. Dulanie.

Honora averted her head; for one instant the same sound, as of the rushing of many waters, rang through her ears and brain; sudden darkness, as of a thunder-cloud, whelmed her eyes and heart; her muscles failed, her breath ceased, her pulses stopped, as once before; then, by a mighty effort of the will, she saved herself from swooning, resumed her self-control, and turned a calm gaze of consoling faith upon her husband's countenance. She would not, as yet, trust her voice to speak; but when she did, her words and tones were courageous and inspiring.

But from this day, blow after blow fell upon the devoted heads of the unhappy pair. The next morning's mail brought a formal announcement of the expulsion, by vote, of Godfrey Farquier Dulanie from his seat in the House of Representatives. The reception of this degrading announcement brought, for the first time since his arrest, a burning blush of unmerited shame to the brow of Mr. Dulanie. He would willingly have kept the intelligence from his wife, but that Honora learned it, as she also learned the day of execution, from the public press and the popular gossip. And afser fervent prayer for strength and long struggle, she once more gained the supremacy over sorrow, terror and despair, and, with a calm and comforting countenance, entered her husband's cell, sat down beside him on the cot, laid her gentle hand upon his shoulder, raised her true eyes to his face, and said—

"Dearest Godfrey, I know all—all that you know—and can bear all that you bear! Let there be no more concealments, as there shall be no more partings between us! For mark you, Mr. Dulanie, so long as I live and you live, I will remain with you. Ah, my husband! through all—all! What you can endure, I can endure! And to the last moment of your life I will be by your side! My hand shall be the last to clasp your own—my eyes the last to receive your gaze!"

"Honora! Father in Heaven, Honora! have you strength to do this?"

"God helping me, I have and I will do it—*and then die!*" she mentally added.

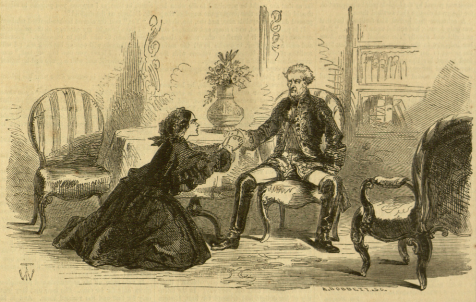
Calmly, firmly, and even cheerfully, Honora bore up during the day, and at night, no eye save that of the Omniscient witnessed the crushing sorrow that overwhelmed and held her in its serpent folds until the morning, when the necessity of appearing with a serene countenance in the presence of her husband, imparted a sort of miraculous strength of endurance and self-control.

Godfrey Dulanie also exercised a marvelous power of self-government. Feeling deeply the dark degradation of his present position and approaching fate—his life of lofty aspiration, persevering effort, and recently acquired honors, prematurely blighted; his popular favor turned to public execration; his well-won fame to unmerited infamy; his promise of glorious days cut short by shameful death; his sole legacy to his widowed bride a dishonored name and an incurable sorrow! Ah, Heaven, he felt it all! He suffered only as the strong in heart can suffer, and endured only as the great in soul can endure, without a complaint, without a groan, without a sigh that might wound the spirit of another.

His time was passed in preparation for death—in "setting his house in order," and girding himself for his journey through the "valley of the shadow." He made such provision for Honora until her majority, as his limited means would allow. He wrote letters or received visits from such friends as evil fortune had left him, and he passed many hours of the day and night in reading the Bible, in meditation and in prayer.

Through all these days his friends were not idle. Renewed application had been made in his behalf for the clemency of the Executive, but made, alas! in vain; no pardon, no respite, not a day's reprieve from death was granted to the unhappy man.

Honora, whose faith in her husband's perfect guiltlessness amounted to knowledge, and who confidently believed that if the opportunity were granted her, she should be able to impress the same faith upon the mind of the Executive, who would then feel constrained to grant the petition, besought, with tears and prayers, to be permitted to journey to the capital, and seek an interview with the governor.



HONORA PETITIONING GOVERNOR STERNE FOR A RESPITE FOR HER HUSBAND.

But it was now the dead of winter; the snow lay two feet deep upon the level, and drifted in avalanches along the mountain passes; the weather was tempestuous, the roads difficult or impracticable; stage and wagon-traveling on many routes had stopped. And Mr. Dulanie would in no wise consent that his wife should undertake a journey that he knew would be a useless endangering of her health and life, or seek an interview which he felt in his soul would involve a fruitless sacrifice of her self-respect and dignity.

Meanwhile his days were dwindling to the shortest span.

It was the Monday before the Friday appointed for his execution, that an event occurred that revived the dying hope of Honora. Governor Sterne arrived at Piedmont on his route north. Honora chanced to receive this intelligence on the very evening of the day of his excellency's arrival. She was informed of it after she had left the prison, and was on her way up to her "chamber of desolation," by Mrs. Wardour, who had heard the news from a Piedmont man who had come into town.

Honora's oppressed heart rebounded in her bosom. Now she would have the prayed-for opportunity of speaking with the governor, her old friend and suitor; surely he would listen to her arguments—surely he would be impressed with her faith, and grant her request! She hurried up into her chamber, closed the door, and threw herself on her knees, to pray for a blessing upon her purposed undertaking, before she sought repose. Repose!—for many weeks misery had murdered sleep; now hope kept her wide awake!

Early in the morning she sought her husband's cell, told him the news, and renewed her request; with impassioned earnestness, she implored his permission to seek the governor's presence. "For oh, Mr. Dulanie!" she said, "even should the petition be again rejected, and the worst befalls, it will be my only earthly comfort to remember that this means of saving you was not left untried!"

This last argument was irresistible, and the passionately desired permission was given.

Honora hastened to make her preparations. The perilous state of the mountain pass precluded the possibility of traveling by a carriage; but through the good offices of Mr. Wardour, she procured the use of a sturdy mule for herself, and a mountain pony for William Wardour, who was to attend her on the journey. It was but nine o'clock in the morning when the lady and her young groom set forth. A hard ride of half an hour through the wintry woods of the plain, brought them to the foot of the ridge, then two hours' slow and toilsome efforts brought them up the steep and difficult ascent, and down the yet more difficult and dangerous declivity of the snow-covered mountain pass, at the foot of which nestled the old mansion-house of Piedmont.

It was with suspended breath and pausing pulse that Honora drew rein at the door of her old home, in which, but two short months before, she had been made a blessed bride, but to which she was now an alien, and at which sojourned the one man who held her husband's—nay, her *own* life, in the hollow of his hand!

In this wintry weather, there was no servant lingering about the outside of the premises, so her little groom sprang from his pony, took the reins from her hands, led her mule to the block, secured him, and offered his hand to assist her in alighting.

With an effort that brought breath back to her laden lungs, and sent the curdling blood circulating through her veins, she leaped lightly from her horse, and, trembling in every limb, went up the steps to the piazza—that very piazza which had witnessed the betrothal of herself and Godfrey.

The window shutters of the two front rooms on either side of the entrance door were open, and the ruddy glow of fire-light through crimson curtains, shone out in comfortable contrast to the snow-clad earth and wintry wind without.

She went to the door and knocked, and was admitted by Zerubbabel, who stared at her with speechless surprise, and then looked frightened at having unwittingly shown her so much courtesy as to open the door.

"Is Governor Sterne staying here, Zerubbabel?"

"Yes'm!" replied the scared boy, with dying tones and dilated eyes.

Honora tore a leaf from her tablets, and wrote a few lines as follows—

"Mrs. Godfrey Dulanie presents her respectful compliments to Governor Sterne, and begs the favor of an interview in the library, where she awaits his excellency."

She placed it in the hand of the boy, saying—

"Show me into the library, and then take this to Governor Sterne."

"Yes'm!" ejaculated the lad, who, though frightened at what he had done and was about to do, was so constrained by her commanding manner, that he instantly obeyed.

Leading the way up stairs, he opened the door into a well-warmed and well-lighted library—the very library in which, two months before, her happy bridegroom, now, alas, a prisoner under sentence of death, had taken a parting glass of wine with his circle of congratulating friends, just a moment before his unexpected arrest!

She seated herself in one of the easy chairs that sat on each side of the round table which stood before the glowing grate. Leaning her elbow upon the table, and her head upon her hand, she waited in intense anxiety the coming of the governor.

Ah! Honora was greatly changed within the last two months! The firm contour of form and feature, the gentle pride of eye and brow, the graceful hauteur of air and carriage, were gone now! Her fine face was delicate even to fragility; her pure complexion pale and transparent as pearl in contrast to the rich, dark tresses plainly divided over her noble brow; her large, dark gray eyes smoldering in deepest gloom beneath their long, black lashes, or suddenly flashed forth with the wild and frightened glare of a hunted hart. She wore, perhaps in lack of something plainer, a dress of rich black brocade, with a mantilla and bonnet of black velvet, and a vail of black Chantilly lace, a delicate white lace collar and cuffs, and dainty white kid gloves, completed her elegant costume. A mournful beauty in her attitude and air lent an irresistible charm to her appearance.

Governor Sterne was far too gallant to keep a lady waiting. Perhaps the reader knows that chivalric gallantry is the peculiar forte of good-looking single gentlemen of an uncertain age. At all events, in something less than three minutes from the time that Zerubbabel left the library, the door opened and Governor Sterne entered—a tall, finely-formed, rather stout, very handsome, grave and dignified gentleman of about forty-five, with an erect form, and a square, massive face, framed in a profusion of iron gray hair and whiskers, and with a tone, a glance and a smile of peculiar fascination, when he pleased to exercise that power.

"Good morning, madam," he said, with his softest voice, and with his most winning smile, and courteous bow, as he advanced towards the table on the left of which Honora was seated. The lady arose to receive him, but with a graceful waive of his hand and a gracious tone he prayed her to resume her seat, and promised to follow her example.

They sat down. Governor Sterne on the right, Honora on the left, the round table between them, the glowing fire before them.

"I trust that you have been well, madam, since I had the honor of meeting you last?" inquired the governor, in a bland voice, as he rested his left elbow upon the table, and turned with a smile of grave courtesy towards his companion.

"As well, sir, as the calamitous circumstances will admit," replied the lady, truthfully, but with a choking voice, for it tried her soul to listen to these commonplaces of courtesy now so very much *out* of place.

There was a silence of a few minutes, during which Honora struggled with herself, and strove for words wherewith to open that communication for which the governor seemed courteously to wait. Perceiving at length, however, that each moment her embarrassment grew deeper and more distressing, the governor graciously relieved her by saying, with a show of great deference—

"You did me the honor, madam, to command my attendance. I am here at your orders. Will you deign, therefore, to inform me in what manner I can be so happy as to serve you?"

"Ah! sir, can you be at a loss to know!" exclaimed Honora, with passionate earnestness.

The governor turned his head, with an attitude and expression of polite attention, and well assumed perplexity—the governor seemed very much at a loss.

"Will you do me the honor, madam, to explain in what way I can be so fortunate as to please you?"

"*Please me!* Oh, sir! you can do infinitely more than please me! You can give me back my life and all that makes life of any worth!" exclaimed Honora, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes imploringly to his face.

"Speak, madam! I fear you overrate my power; but all that a man may do for a lady I freely promise. Command me, madam."

Without another word, Honora arose, and with a profound obeisance laid her petition upon the table before him.

The governor raised it, recognized it as the petition that he had seen and rejected before, and, with a well-feigned look of sorrow, gently pushed it aside, saying, with grave courtesy—

"Your commands, as I feared, transcend my powers of compliance, madam."

"Oh! do not say so, sir. Well do I know that this Divine power of life and death is vested for us in your hands alone. Wield it divinely! give us life! lift the miserable woman before you from the deepest depths of a sorrow you never dreamed of, to the heights of a joy you can never imagine!" prayed Honora, with hands wrung together until their delicate blue veins were started up and knotted like dark cords, and with wild, dilated eyes fixed in passionate supplication upon his face.

"You love this bridegroom of yours very much, madam," said the governor, with a strange and ominous change in his voice.

"*Love him!*" responded Honora, in a tone deep, low, and vibrating with intense emotion—"*Love him!* Oh, sir! at a less solemn crisis your question might call a blush to my cheek; but not now—not when life or death may hang upon the next words you utter! Yes, *I love him!*—so much that if he should suffer the death to which he is condemned, I also, who have not been tried or convicted, must share his unmerited fate—for I could not survive him!"

"What, madam, would you be a suicide?" exclaimed the governor, in a voice of horror.

"No, no; nor would it be necessary. I should not destroy myself, but *die!*"

"Madam—all this while you are standing. I pray you resume your seat."

"No, no, sir! This attitude, or one still more humble, is the proper posture for a supplicant in the presence of the power who holds her life in his hands!"

"Why harp you on this subject, lady? I hold no power over your precious life."

"Over my *husband's*, then; and through his over mine."

"You mistake, madam. My prerogative is not so unlimited as you imagine," he said, taking up the petition, glancing over it, and then laying it down, he continued: "The pardoning prerogative, as vested in the Executive, is certainly a discretionary power; but it is, also, a holy trust, and should be exercised only on rare occasions, well understood, and in certain conditions under no one of which Mr. Dulanie's case comes. He has had a fair trial; he has been convicted under the most crushing weight of both circumstantial evidence and direct testimony, which has left not the shadow of a doubt as to his guilt in the minds of any, except perhaps his too confiding bride, and which has left no possible loop-hole for his escape from death. Pardon me, madam, that I have spoken thus plainly upon a most painful subject. I did so only to justify myself before you."

While he spoke Honora stood with her form half bent towards him, her white hands wrung painfully together, her bloodless lips compressed, and her wild, impassioned eyes strained forth in an agony of entreaty.

"Oh, sir," she began, "there is no need to justify yourself to me! And neither do I petition for a *pardon*, since no crime has been committed. But for a respite from death I implore you on my knees!" she continued, sinking at his feet, and bowing her head almost to the dust before him.

"Madam, arise! The respite for which you pray comes under the same category as the pardon for which you scorn to petition. I could as consistently grant the one as the other. And if I could, bethink you, dear lady, of what little use such respite would be. It would, indeed, only serve to prolong the agony, better got over at once. Dear lady, arise! It wounds me cruelly to see you thus," he said, taking her hand, and gently essaying to lift her to her feet.

"No, no! No, no! Here on my knees—until you grant my prayer! What use would the respite be, you ask? Every use! Sir, he is guiltless! he is guiltless! God knoweth that he is; and in the additional length of days that you might accord him, God might discover the truth, and bring to light his stainless integrity. Oh, sir! grant us—for you *can* grant us—that one remaining chance of life! Think what it is to die for a crime he never committed! To be cut off in the bloom of youth, and glow of love, and glory of fame! To be forced violently from this dear life, and warm sunshine, and bright world, full of sweet affections, and aspiring hopes, and to be crowded down into the darksome grave! To suffer a public and shameful death, and leave behind a dishonored name! Think what this must be to him—to him so gifted, so ambitious, so full of glorious promise! to him who had just reached the acme of all his toils, and hopes, and aspirations—to be suddenly struck down—down—down to this deep Gehenna of destruction! *Oh, sir, do you realize this?* Governor Sterne, hear me! pity me! save me! and I will bless your mercy, and pray for your happiness forever!" she cried, convulsively clasping both his hands in both of hers, and straining her wild and terrified eyes up to his face, in the deep anguish of supplication.

"Honora Paule," he replied, in a solemn tone, "there was a time not long ago, when, at *your* feet, *I* poured forth my soul in prayer for that mercy which you now implore of me, for another! Only, Honora, it was not for the boon of *life* I prayed, but for that blessing which would have made life passing sweet to me!"

Honora! The current of her blood turned back on hearing these words. All that she had ever heard of the fierce, cruel, and relentless spirit that lurked behind his fascinating smile, and suave, stately courtesy, rushed upon her memory, congealing her heart. She raised her eyes in consternation to his face.

There was certainly nothing in that countenance to terrify or discourage her. It was as I have before described it to be—a noble one; and now far more benignant in promise than any of his words had been. Honora cast her fate upon the countenance, and answered, with grave sweetness—

"Remember those things no longer, sir; or, remember them only in mercy; and if ever you have regarded poor Honora Paule, be magnanimous to Honora Dulanie!"

"I will endeavor to be *just*, at least. Honora, a respite would do Mr. Dulanie no good; it would but indefinitely prolong his imprisonment, with the faint 'hope deferred that maketh the heart sick'——" He paused, and gazed down upon his supplicant, who remained with her hands clasped, and her eyes fixed upon him with the same expression of wild entreaty.

"Honora," he said, "there is one condition upon which I will save Godfrey Dulanie's life and honor, so that this day he shall go forth from the prison a free and vindicated man!"

The blood rushed in torrents to her brow, and, retreating, left her even paler than before. Her eyes were more wildly dilated; she looked and felt like one suddenly stricken with madness!

"What is it you say?" she inquired, in a voice sunken with intense anxiety and perplexity—"Oh! *did* I hear aright? You—save his life and *honor!*"

"His LIFE AND HONOR will I save upon a certain condition!"

Honora sprang to her feet, as an overwhelming tide of joy rushed over her.

"His life and honor! His life I knew you could save; but—his life and *honor!* Oh, God! my God! I thank thee! for this is more than I could have hoped for, or would have dared to pray for! —I am not *insane* or *dreaming*, am I, sir?" she asked, turning a distressed, appealing gaze upon the governor.

"No, madam. You have heard aright. I will save Mr. Dulanie's life and honor—*upon certain conditions with which only you can comply!*"

"Command me, then. What would I not do or suffer to save my husband! My whole fortune—my life, if necessary, would I give to purchase his salvation!" exclaimed Honora, with eager earnestness.

"Something of much less value to *you*, but of much more worth to *me* than life or fortune, is the condition to which I allude. Be seated, dear lady, while I speak of the terms upon which I will do as I have promised," said the governor as, with grave courtesy, he handed his companion to a chair, and drew his own to her side.

"And now—the conditions," said Honora.

CHAPTER XXVI,

THE TEMPTATION.

> The soul that to Jesus had fled for repose,
> I will not, I will not, desert to her foes:
> That soul though all hell should endeavor to shake,
> I will never, no never, no never forsake.
>
> SACRED SONGS.

Governor Sterne arose, and with his graceful, gliding step, passed to the door, opened it, looked out, and apparently satisfied that the coast was clear, re-closed it and returned and resumed his seat opposite Honora.

He drew his chair forward, so that when he rested his elbow on the table and leaned his head upon his hand, his face was somewhat too familiarly close to that of the lady.

"This is understood to be a confidential interview, madam?"

"Since you desire—yes, sir," replied Honora, with dignity, "only inform me in what manner you can save my husband."

"Nay, madam, that is my *secret*, only to be imparted upon conditions. I have also to ask of you a promise that all which passes between us in this interview shall, in any event, be kept private."

Honora paused a moment to reflect, and then answered directly but still with dignity:

"Your Excellency has my promise."

"Honora," he said, "'all that a man hath will he give for his life!' How much would a woman give for the life of her lover—of the man whom she loves?—How much would *you* give?"

"All that might be required of me!" exclaimed the lady impetuously.

"*All?*" questioned the governor with emphasis.

"ALL!" replied the lady, who was of too pure a heart to suspect wrong. "All that I have! *my* life, were that possible?"

He looked at her with deep and wicked meaning in his evil eyes. He drew his chair closer and dropped his voice to a whisper in addressing her.

How dared he utter the next words that fell from his lips? They formed an infamous proposal, that I may not stain these pages by transcribing.

Honora sprang to her feet as if the deadly cobra-di-capello had raised its crested head before her—the indignant blood in torrents crimsoning her face, neck, and bosom, fire flashing from her eyes, anger convulsing her frame. She could not speak, but stood for an instant pressing both hands hard upon her heart to keep down its rising passion. Then growing very pale, she suddenly turned and walked towards the door.

Governor Sterne started up to delay her—"Madam! Honora! do not leave me thus! hear me explain!"

But as if scorning to hold an instant of further intercourse with one so base, the lady went on.

"Honora! madam! you must really hear me!" persisted the governor, following her and seizing her hand.

But scorning to struggle, to reply, or even to listen, she just put forth her other hand, took the bell-rope and rang a peal that presently brought Zerubbabel into the room.

"Attend me to the door!" commanded Honora to this functionary, who immediately obeyed her.

With the air of an outraged empress the lady passed through the room, leaving the governor standing there, the picture of discomfiture.

She left the house, without meeting any one among her relations, who perhaps purposely kept out of her way. She re-mounted her mule, and, attended by her faithful little escort, took her way across the mountain, through the woods and over the plains to the "county seat."

It was sunset when she reached W.

Leaving her mule in charge of Willie Wardour, she entered the prison and proceeded at once to the cell of her husband.

He was seated at his little stand deeply engaged in the perusal of the scriptures. When she appeared, he looked up, arose and held out his arms.

She approached and sank into them. He asked no question; she volunteered no information. It was a silent embrace. Then he released her, and they both sat down upon the side of the cot, holding each other's hands. At last—

"It is all over!" she said.

"I know it, dearest Honora! dearest wife, I know it! I knew it before you went; I consented only to satisfy you."

"Well! I *am* satisfied. Otherwise, had I not made this effort, I should have been discontented! Now I know that every human means we have used to save ourselves has failed. Therefore it is the will of God that we go hence! We must be resigned! *Resigned?* I do not know that that is the word! perhaps it *should* be *grateful!* For, a little sooner than we expected, we change the scene! If unmerited shame rests upon our early grave on this earth, what care *we?* *Our* life is in another sphere! It cannot hurt *us* that men point to our humble grave and say: 'There lay the coward and his wife!' For we shall be beyond all care for that!"

"Dearest Honora! my own dearest Honora! why do you continue to say 'we,' 'our,' 'us,' in speaking of my doomed lot, as if your fate were joined to mine so that you must suffer all that I suffer? Sweet wife, it is not so! One sacrifice will content relentless destiny. After I shall be at rest, a long life of duty and happiness will remain for you. Think of me only as the cloud that obscured your dawn of life but passed away long ere noon, leaving all the sunny day bright to its setting," he said, looking down upon her face with a smile full of benignant love.

She arose and threw herself into his arms, cast hers about his shoulders and strained him to her faithful bosom, and amid the most fervent caresses murmured—

"A long life will remain to *both!* to *both!* but it will be a life *beyond the grave!* Oh! I am thine own! own! own! Nothing—not death itself—can sever us! God will not leave me when he takes thee! He is too good! he will not curse me so! There is no reason why I should be left. I have beside thee, no close tie on earth—none! No one will be bereaved by my departure—no, not one! Therefore there is no reason why I should not accompany thee on thy journey to the other world, and I feel that the Lord will let me go. We shall begin our married life in that other world, dearest! and I am content! I am happy since we go together!"

Extremes meet. Sorrow sometimes sublimes to rapture. But it is only the utmost stretch of grief that so reaches ecstacy. And thus it was with Honora now. But it is an overstrain of nature that cannot last long; either the mind flies off in phrensy and confirmed mania, or there is a sudden collapse and fall into despair and idiocy, or else, death steps in and closes the scene.

It could not last long with Honora. It was obvious to the most superficial observer, that without the intervention of an especial Providence, it would be as she had said, she would die with her husband!

He laid her head upon his breast and soothed her excited mind. He asked her no questions relative to her interview with the governor; he knew that it was fruitless and he felt that it must also have been painful, and refrained from troubling her to recur to the details. Little did he suspect the deep dishonor of the terms of pardon that had been offered her.

And Honora forbore to distress him with any hint of that infamous proposal. Nothing more was said on the topic of reprieve, nor was the subject recurred to between them again.

The next day, Tuesday, the village paper, the "Weekly Beacon," contained the following paragraph:—

THE APPROACHING EXECUTION.—We understand that yesterday afternoon a final appeal for pardon was made by the wife of Godfrey Dulanie, to Governor Sterne, at Piedmont, where his excellency is on a visit of a few days. This last petition having been rejected, the unhappy prisoner will suffer the extreme penalty of the law on Friday next.

Honora only saw the caption of that paragraph and, shuddering, turned her eyes away. But Mr. Dulanie read it through, and with a melancholy smile laid the paper aside. The remainder of the week was passed by the hapless pair in preparation for the great change that awaited them.

A calmness that looked like fortitude, but that was only despair, had settled upon Honora. "Pale and still and silently" she walked at morn from her lodgings to the prison, and at evening from the prison to her lodgings. Scarcely an atom of food passed her lips by day, scarcely an instant's sleep visited her eyes at night. Only in the presence of her husband was she observant, tender and devoted.

Godfrey Dulanie passed his few remaining hours of life in reading the scriptures, in prayer and in converse with his beloved wife. His fortitude never for an instant forsook him save when he looked at Honora, saw how much she suffered, and how much for his sake she suppressed! And he was almost tempted to wish that it might be even as she said: that she might be permitted to die with him rather than suffered to live a long life of incurable sorrow. He prayed with her and for her. And thus in sorrow but in mutual support the hours passed that brought at last Thursday night—the night before the execution—his last night of life?

CHAPTER XXV.

THE NIGHT AND THE MORNING.

> "And bid me not depart," she cried,
> "My husband, say not so!
> This is no time to quit thy side—
> Peace! peace! I cannot go!
> I have been with thee in thine hour
> Of glory and of bliss;
> Doubt not its memory's living power
> To strengthen me in *this!*
> And thou, mine honored love and true,
> Bear on, bear nobly on!
> We have the blessed heaven in view,
> Whose rest shall soon be won!
>
> MRS. HEMANS.

The last night of Godfrey Dulanie's alloted life! His few short years of youth were spent and gone; his days were fled; his future contained only *hours* and they were numbered; for before the noon of another day it was appointed for him to die! No power on earth save one could redeem him from the grave, and that one potentate had utterly refused to interfere. He must, therefore, surely die; his brief and fitful dream of life was over!

It was now six o'clock, the usual hour at which Honora was accustomed to take leave of him for the night.

The hapless couple sat together on the side of the cot. Before them stood the little stand, upon which was a lighted lamp and an open Bible, a chapter of which they had just finished reading. Each had stifled the mighty anguish of the breast, and had struggled to comfort and sustain the other. They were now silent; and the awful shadow of death seemed lowering over the heads of both.

Through imprisonment, sorrow and anxiety, Mr. Dulanie had become emaciated in feature and cadaverous in complexion; but in the expression of his countenance, in his words and manners he still evinced unshaken firmness.

Grief, care and vigilance had so blanched and sharpened the face of Honora, that her large gray eyes and her broad expanse of brow crowned with its "aureole of ebon locks" seemed preternaturally developed. Yet she, too, though secretly dying of sorrow, exhibited a matchless patience and serenity.

But it was now, as I said, six o'clock, the usual hour of closing. Good Mr. Wardour tapped at the cell-door, and upon the response of Mr. Dulanie bidding him come in, he unlocked the door and entered.

"You are about to shut up for the night?" inquired the prisoner.

"Yes," replied the warden, in a broken voice, for he sympathized deeply and painfully with the hapless pair.

"Honora, dearest Honora, bid me good night and leave me now," said Mr. Dulanie, gently drawing his bride to his bosom for a parting embrace.

"I will never leave you more," responded the lady, in a low, deep voice.

"But, sweet wife, reflect!"

"I *have* reflected. And for the few short hours we have to live I will remain by your side."

"My own dearest! take some pity on yourself! Do not so fearfully try your strength," he entreated, gazing on her tortured but resolute countenance.

"I have strength to *suffer all* save separation from thee in thy time of trial; strength to *do all* save desert thee in thy hour of bitterest need; strength to *bear all* that may be required of me!" she replied. And then turning to the warden, she added—

"Mr. Wardour, I shall not leave my husband's cell to-night."

The warden bowed in silence; he was not sure that he was doing right in permitting this infringement of custom; but he could not find it in his heart to refuse this last comfort to the unhappy lady.

It was usual to leave a turnkey in the cell of the condemned to guard his person through the night preceding his execution; but this also the kind-hearted jailor took upon himself to modify. When about to withdraw from the cell he said—

"Mr. Dulanie, Tom Turner will lie on a mattrass outside your door; so that, if you should need anything in the night, or early in the morning, you have only to rap and he will attend you."

"I thank you very much, Mr. Wardour," replied the prisoner, who perfectly understood this change of the usual etiquette, and accordingly appreciated the kindness. "I thank you very much; and while I have the opportunity, permit me to express my acknowledgments for all the kind attention you have shown me since I have been your——"

"Guest," interrupted the warden, who never could endure to hear the word "prisoner" spoken. "Well, sir, it is my desire, as well as my interest, to make all my guests as comfortable as circumstances will permit. Good night, sir. God comfort you, madam." And so saying, the good-hearted man withdrew from the cell.

Godfrey trimmed his lamp, and resumed the reading of the Scriptures He read in a low and modulated voice to reach only the ear of his wife, the seven penitential psalms of David, and then the last seven chapters of the gospel of St. John, containing the most eloquent account of the last scenes of our Saviour's mortal life. After which they knelt and prayed together—prayed fervently for resignation to the will of Heaven; for grace to forgive their destroyers, even as He the Sinless One had forgiven his enemies; and lastly for strength to go through the awful trial that awaited them upon the morrow.

These devotions occupied the whole evening until ten o'clock. Then, calmed, strengthened, and refreshed, they prepared to lie down and rest. Neither expected to sleep; but each sought repose only in the hope of bringing it to the other.

The eyes of Honora never closed in sleep for one single instant, but lest her wakefulness should keep him from slumber, she lay perfectly still.

Godfrey believing her to be asleep, thanked God for the blessing, and fearing to stir lest he should awaken her, gave himself up to such meditations as he deemed appropriate to his condition. In the midst of these, sleep, like a benedicite, fell softly on his soul. Honora knew by his regular breathing that this was so. And she folded her hands together and prayed for him—and for herself so far as that she might be permitted to die when he should die. While thus praying the angel of sleep pressed down her eyelids also, and she, too, slept.

It is passing sweet, so to sleep, and to forget our sorrows; but oh! it is terrible after such a sleep, and such a forgetting, to awake to all the awful realities of fate! Memory then returns with the tremendous shock of a first calamity.

Honora slept and dreamed—a gorgeous dream of love and glory!

In her dream she is a happy bride, by her husband's side. Their earthly ambition is crowned with the highest success. He moves, and fame follows his footsteps, and she basks in his reflected light. They stand within a vast and crowded hall; he speaks, and admiring multitudes hang upon his inspired and inspiring words. The scene changes. The people have crowned him, their demi-god, with the greatest power in their gift. They have called him to fill the highest seat in the commonwealth. He stands within a magnificent hall, sumptuous with velvet hangings, splendid with reflected light, crowded with an innumerable company. He stands upon an elevated platform, beneath a gorgeous canopy of crimson and gold; he is closely surrounded by the chief men of the nation; one, the most venerable among them, administers the oath of office, and presents to him a copy of the Holy Scripture for his salute; he makes it with deep reverence, and then steps forward, bows, and pronounces his inaugural address. It is greeted with shouts of applause by the vast assembly that fills to suffocation the great hall; by the crowds that choke up the galleries, stairs, lobbies, and ante-rooms leading to it; by the multitudes that throng the streets of the city without; thunders of applause rend the very sky! In the intensity of her delight and triumph for him, Honora awakes——

Oh, God! Oh, God! The narrow walls of the prison cell enclose her! There, on the poor cot, lies the worshiped of her heart, the hero of her glorious dream, prostrate, emaciate, bloodless—and soon, oh, Heaven of Heavens, to die!

The shouts she had heard in her dream were the voices of a rude crowd in the street below the prison, who were cursing, swearing, and elbowing each other, as they hurried tumultuously onward to secure good standing-places on Gallows Hill, outside the town, where the execution was to take place. Honora saw and heard them as she turned and looked through the grated window that was close beside her pillow, and that overlooked the street below; and, totally bereft of courage by her bright, delusive dream and its terrible contrast, she cowered down, groaning, shuddering, and writhing in extremity of anguish.

"My Honora! my beloved one! take courage!"

It was his voice that spoke! his voice! it recalled her to a sense of duty! With one of those mighty efforts in which years of vitality are in a moment melted down, she controlled her agony, composed herself, and arose.

"It was the *dream* that did it; but fear nothing for me, dearest; I am myself, and shall not fail again!" she said, sweetly, yielding her lips to his kiss as serenely as if she had only arisen to superintend their house and sit at the head of their table.

"*Oh, these dreams!* They are but dreams 'within a dream.' For what says the poet—

> 'Our life is but a sleep and a forgetting;
> The soul that rises in us, our life's star
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar.'

"Sweet Honora! our sleep is almost over! We shall soon awake! Is it so hard, dear love, to wake?"

"No, no, not when we awake together," she murmured.

They soon knelt and offered up their morning orisons. It was well, they received new strength from this, for as they arose beside the cot, the little grated window was before them, and through its bars they saw the eastern horizon all blazing with the glorious light of the rising sun, and the snow-clad hills all crimsoned with the ruddy reflection; but oh, God of compassion! there, on the highest hill—there, strongly marked against the white back-ground of the snow and the crimson glow of the sky—reared the ghastly gibbet! A motley crowd surrounded the scaffold; other crowds in different groups, by different paths, were climbing the hill.

With a terrible shudder Honora turned away her head and covered her eyes.

Calmly Godfrey Dulanie drew the little curtain across the grating, to shut from her eyes the view.

The turnkey soon tapped at the cell door, entered and supplied them with the simple necessaries for their prison toilet. Then the warden came with the slight breakfast, which, with the exception of the coffee, was sent untasted away.

The brief winter morning was already far spent. The execution was appointed to take place between the hours of nine and twelve. It was now half-past nine. As the humble breakfast service was removed, Mr. Willoughby entered the cell. In speechless sorrow he pressed the hands of Godfrey and of Honora. And when he had recovered his composure, he entered into conversation with them, and finding both calm and firm, he proposed prayer. Ah, prayer! greatest comfort and support in the heaviest afflictions! Often had they resorted to the fountain of strength and consolation, and never had they come unblessed away. Again, led by the minister of God, they prayed, and again were they blessed.

Ten o'clock! As they arose from their kneeling posture there was a sound of a carriage drawn up before the prison gate. Mr. Willoughby shivered, for well he knew the import of that slight noise. Next there was heard the coming of several feet along the lobby, and a pausing at the cell door, followed almost instantly by the opening of the door and the entrance of the sheriff alone.

All knew his errand! He was clothed in a suit of mourning, and the solemnity of his countenance did not belie his sombre costume. He looked much disturbed on seeing the lady still in the cell; but recovered himself, bowed, and inquired of Mr. Dulanie whether he had slept well, and how he found himself this morning.

Mr. Dulanie answered that he had rested through the night, and was prepared this morning to meet his fate.

Again the sheriff bowed, looked with a troubled expression of countenance at Honora, and touching the elbow of the clergyman, drew him aside and whispered—

"Why is it that Mrs. Dulanie is still suffered by her friends to linger here. She should have been taken away before this. Pray see to it, that she goes now."

"What? Has their parting come so soon? When do we leave the prison for the place of execution?" asked the minister, in distress.

"Within half an hour, and there are preliminaries to be arranged in the cell which *she* should not be permitted to witness. I will retire for fifteen minutes; you may leave them alone for that length of time if they desire it, but at the end of fifteen minutes you will please to take her away."

"I will endeavor to do so," said the sorrowful minister.

"You can leave her in a place of safety and then return in time, as I suppose you purpose to attend Mr. Dulanie on the scaffold?"

"Yes," said the almost broken-hearted minister.

"I have brought my carriage, as the prisoner is a gentleman, to take him to execution. Yourself and Mr. Dulanie will occupy the back seat; I will sit in front. I leave you now to your task," concluded the sheriff, and with a grave nod he retired from the cell.

Mr. Willoughby in sorrow drew near the prisoner and whispered—

"My dear friend, I am about to leave you alone with your wife for fifteen minutes. Say all that you have to say to her in that time, for at its conclusion you will give her up to my care, and yield yourself up with, I trust, a martyr's heroism to suffer the will of Heaven."

"I thank you," answered Godfrey Dulanie. And the minister left the cell.

"Come hither, dear Honora," he said, as the clergyman closed the door.

Honora drew nearer, sat down beside him on the cot, and yielded her slight form to his encircling arm.

"Sweet wife! you will not try to keep your strange resolution; you cannot go through with it, Honora; you will abandon it, my darling; you will suffer me *now* to bless you and bid you adieu, and leave you in the charge of Mr. Willoughby, who will take you to his wife, your friend! Say, sweet Honora, will you not consent to this?

"Oh, ask me not to leave you while you live! Indeed I cannot do it! And fear no more weakness from me! I am past all human feeling now! I go to strengthen and sustain you, not to embarrass you! You will see!"

In vain were all his arguments and persuasions given only for *her* sake. She *knew* that they were only for that and she resisted them. And in his heart he thanked her for her heroism, and received comfort from her fidelity.

"Well, well, sweet Honora, it shall be even as you say! You shall be with me to the last! Your hand shall receive my latest clasp and your eyes my latest glance; for I feel that you are heroic and devoted, and that God will sustain you or take you!" he said, and strained her to his bosom in a fervent embrace.

The fifteen minutes of grace had now elapsed and the minister had re-entered the cell, to take leave of his friend and remove Honora.

"She will not leave me!" said Mr. Dulanie, "My wife will attend me to my death."

The minister started in surprise and distress. "Oh! this must not be," he said.

"It is useless to expostulate! she will not depart from me!"

"But, my dear Godfrey! my poor Honora! you know not what you do!

"It is useless! you can say nothing that I have not already said and said in vain! She will not leave me!"

While they were talking thus, the sheriff re-entered the cell. Seeing Honora still lingering there, he frowned with perplexity, and exclaimed to the clergyman—

"What! not gone yet!"

"No, alas! she refuses to be separated from her husband," replied the minister.

"That is most embarrassing indeed! that is exceedingly distressing! for you know, in that case, what will have to be done! She must be forced from the cell. What a scene that will make! How excessively painful! What shall we do?" exclaimed the sheriff in consternation.

Honora, without ever hearing, guessed the purport of their conversation. Calmly she arose and confronted the sheriff, saying quietly—

"Look in my face, Mr. Harrison! Do you see any sign of weakness or of failing here? Oh, sir! with *me* and for *him* the bitterness of death is past! Sir, I have suffered everything that can be suffered in daily and nightly contemplating the consummation of this very day! Daily and nightly has the scaffold been present to my agonized vision until at last I have grown accustomed to its horrors; it has this hour no terrors for me! I do not dread to attend my husband thither."

"Madam! but this is horrible! most horrible that you should think of being present at such a scene," exclaimed the sorely troubled officer.

"And *why*, Mr Harrison? If my dear husband were dying, should I not be permitted to sit by his side and hold his hand or bathe his brow? Sir! he is dying now, since his very minutes are numbered! I claim the wife's privilege of remaining with him to the last!"

"But, good lady, this cannot be permitted!" expostulated the sheriff.

"Unfortunately for your declaration, sir, you have no power to prevent it. You may indeed debar me from the privilege of ascending the platform with him, but you cannot hinder me from standing with the twelve hundred others that are assembled at the foot of the scaffold," said Honora, firmly.

"The Lord is my witness, lady, that I would not debar you from one privilege that I could grant."

"Then let me ascend the scaffold with my husband, sir! And do not fear that my courage will fail, or that I will give you any trouble, or hinder you in the least from the discharge of your duties. Again look in my eyes! Do you see failure or faltering there? Humanly speaking, my heart is broken, sir! nothing more can hurt it; and the certain knowledge that I shall not survive my husband one hour, gives me the strange courage at which I see you wonder."

"In Heaven's name, madam, be it as you will! You have conquered me!" answered the sheriff, in deep emotion. Then going to Godfrey Dulanie, he said—

"We must set out almost immediately; there is a *garment*, you understand me, that should be put on."

"*The shroud!* for *her* sake I would dispense with its use, if possible," replied Mr. Dulanie, in a low voice. "May I not be permitted to die in the clothes I wear?"

"Assuredly, if you prefer this dress. Is there anything else to attend to before we set forward?"

"Nothing," said the prisoner.

At a signal of the minister all knelt, and for the last time offered up a short and fervent prayer. As soon as they arose, Honora tied on her little bonnet, Godfrey drew her arm within his own, and, preceded by the sheriff and the clergyman, and followed by the warden and turnkey, they left the cell and went below, where, before the prison, the sheriff's carriage waited. Two mounted bailiffs attended the equipage.

The sheriff held the door open; Mr. Dulanie handed Honora in, and entered after her. They two occupied the back seat. The sheriff and the minister followed them, and took the front seat, and the order was given to drive on. As the carriage passed the prison gate into he street, a great shout from the rabble without greeted it. But the bailiff seated on the coach-box beside the coachman gave the order to drive rapidly, and they were whirled along the street, followed by the hoots and cries of the crowd.

A half an hour's rapid drive over the plains outside the town, brought them to the foot of the hill upon which the scaffold had been erected. Here, as they slowly climbed the ascent, the bailiffs had to ride before to keep off the rabble, who, anxious to get a sight at the prisoner, thronged the road. As they neared the top of the hill, they found the crowd denser.

It was with difficulty, and in the face of brutal resistance, obscene abuse and blasphemous oaths, that the mounted bailiffs forced a way for the carriage to pass to the foot of the scaffold. Here they entered a hollow square, formed by the company of Rappahannock militia, whose bayonets glittered in the morning sun around the scaffold.

The carriage drew up at the foot of the ladder. The sheriff got out and handed out his prisoner, and arm in arm they went up the rungs leading to the platform.

The minister then got out, and assisted Honora to alight, and drawing her arm in his, followed the sheriff and the prisoner.

When Godfrey Dulanie appeared upon the platform, high above the heads and in full view of the vast concourse of people assembled around the scaffold, a terrible shout greeted him. But when the next moment a fair, pale woman, led by a clergyman, stepped upon the platform, and stood beside the condemned, a dead silence of awe fell upon the turbulent human sea, and there was a great calm! Two bailiffs to assist the sheriff followed the last couple.

The party on the scaffold, therefore, comprised six persons, grouped as follows: In the center, upon the fatal trap, stood Godfrey Dulanie, whose pale face formed a ghastly contrast to the simple black dress he wore; on his right stood the minister of God, with an open prayer-book in his hand; on his left stood his faithful wife, Honora, also clothed in black, and with a face blanched whiter than his own. Her hand was clasped in his, and her eyes lifted in holy love and faith to his face. Yet no one could look upon her marble face and burning eyes, as they were raised to his, and not feel that her life hung upon his life, and that the snapping of his thread of existence would also sever her own!

The minister opened the book, and amid a deathlike silence commenced reading the solemn service for the dead. The ritual occupied some fifteen minutes, and when it was over, and the minister's voice had ceased, you might have heard a pin fall, so perfect was the stillness. The supreme moment—the moment of the execution—had arrived. At a signal from the sheriff, the clergyman pressed the hand of the prisoner, and withdrew from his side. One bailiff produced the cap—the other the cord! The sheriff advanced his foot near the fatal spring. They all waited only for Godfrey Dulanie to put his wife from his side.

"Come, my own Honora," he said, "show yourself a Christian woman in this trial. Here—give me both your hands! look into my eyes!"

She turned and gave him both her hands, and gazed with deathless love into his eyes.

"This is *not* the last clasp! this is *not* the last glance! We shall meet again in a very few minutes! Wait for me, love, in the clouds above, for I shall not be an hour behind you," she said.

"Dearest, you give me strength to die! God bless you!" he replied, pressing a parting kiss upon her lips, and beckoning to Mr. Willoughby to come and receive her from his arms.

So absorbed were they in the momentous scene in which they were the actors, that they were totolly unconscious of the tumult that was beginning to agitate the vast multitude around the scaffold.

Honora returned her husband's parting kiss and benediction, and yielded herself to the charge of the minister, who, placing one arm around her waist to support her failing form, led her from the spot.

And Godfrey Dulanie was left alone upon the fatal drop! At a signal from the sheriff his two assistants advanced to perform their terrible office. But before the first could slip the cap over the face of the condemned, the tumult that had been rising for the last five minutes now broke into a deafening shout, and—

"HOLD! HOLD! A reprieve! a reprieve!" was thundered to the sky. The vast sea of heads swayed violently to and fro, like the waves of the ocean lashed by a storm, or the multitudinous leaves of the forest, driven by the wind.

"A REPRIEVE! A REPRIEVE!" again arose in thunder from the ground.

And as the crowd swayed and parted right and left, a horseman, bearing a white flag, with his steed covered with foam, and his dress stained with travel, galloped furiously onward, and threw himself from his saddle at the foot of the scaffold. The steed tottered and fell from exhaustion. But the rider, giving no thought to this, sprang up the ladder, bounded upon the platform, and thrust a sealed paper into the hands of the sheriff. That officer tore open the packet, ran his eyes hurriedly over its contents, and then, turning to the amazed prisoner, held out his hand and said—

"Mr. Dulanie, allow me to congratulate you! The governor has relented. His Excellency has granted you a respite of six months!"

"My God, I thank thee!" was Godfrey Dulanie's first words. His next thought was of his wife—"Honora! oh, Honora!" he cried, starting back towards the spot where she lay prone in the arms of the minister.

But Honora had fainted. She had been prepared for death, but not for life; and the sudden joy of the respite had overwhelmed her, and she lay in a deep swoon.

But joy never kills. Honora was soon recovered, and placed carefully in the sheriff's carriage, beside her husband, to be driven back to town.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

FAMILY TREASURES.—The most worthless of all family treasures are indolent females. If a wife knows nothing of domestic duties beyond the parlor or the boudoir, she is not a helpmeet for man, but an incumbrance upon his exertions.

TO MY SISTER.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

Ellie, there's a timid lustre
Dreaming in thy soft, dark eyes,
Like a tender starlight trembling
In the midnight's mystic skies;
And thy features are as faultless
As if carved by Grecian art;
And men bow before thy beauty—
But *I* love thee for thy heart.

There are thoughts of winged brightness
Hiding in thy spirit's cells,
As young humming-birds of summer
Hide among the lily-bells.
May no sudden autumn drive them
Rudely from their fairy nests;
To fly on through chill and tempest,
With worn wings and bleeding breasts.

Last night in the dreary darkness,
When the haunted winds went by,
Feverish fires burned in my bosom,
Till I thought that I must die;
And I felt that it was fearful
To go out alone, alone—
Through the shadow and the silence,
To the eternal and unknown.

Yet the dimness and the mystery
Of the lands beyond the grave,
And the deep and thundering echoes
Of each dark and chilling wave,
That seemed breaking near to sweep me
Down in Death's unsounded sea,
Could not fright this heart, my sister,
From the angel-thought of thee.

We have heard the fairy legends
Of the twilight's dreamy time,
From the same sweet lip together
Falling like a magic chime;
And we've left our home and wandered
Through a waste of Upas dew,
Yet mid wind and blight and blackness,
I have ever found thee true.

It were more than death to leave thee,
Idol of an ardent heart;
And I often ask the angels,
May we never, never part.
Yet the years must bring us changes,
And wherever thou mayest go,
Ellie, may thy fate be brighter
Than thy sister hopes to know.

FRIGHTENING A PIRATE.

A SEA SKETCH.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Captain Ira Barnard used to sail from Portland in a brig called the "Ellen Maria." He had her built for his own use, and she was a neat, pretty craft, after the Baltimore fashion, with heavy fore-topsail and top-gallant-sail, and a goodly bit of canvass for a topsail upon the main. She was painted up to suit his own taste; and, take her all in all, she was one of the handsomest vessels that sailed. The crew consisted of the captain's oldest son—Ira, jr.—who was one-and-twenty, and acted as mate, and six others—all able men, and fit for hard duty.

Early in the spring, the Ellen Maria sailed for Havana with a load of shooks and hoop-poles. She had some other articles for traffic, but these composed the bulk of her cargo.

"Ira," said the skipper, addressing his son, "we must keep a sharp look-out, for I expect to meet old Sanders along here somewhere."

"I was thinking of that," replied Ira.

"He'll have papers for us," added the old man, as he turned towards the wheel.

"Old" Sanders, who was not a bit older than Ira Barnard, senior, commanded the brig Seguin, and was to have left Havana at about the same time on which the Ellen Maria left Portland, and thus Barnard hoped to fall in with him. Nor was he disappointed; for early one morning, when off the coast of Carolina, a sail was discovered to the southward, and in an hour afterwards it was made out to be the Seguin. When the two brigs were near enough, they both hove-to, and Capt. Barnard and his son lowered their boat, and went on board the other vessel. Papers were exchanged; Barnard told all the news from home, and Sanders told of all he had seen in Cuba.

"But," said the latter, with a serious look, "there's one thing I haven't told you. There's a pirate cruising about between here and Havana. She's a Brazilian craft, and manned by Spaniards and negroes. She's a dangerous customer to fall in with."

"A pirate!" cried Ira, in alarm. "Do they kill everybody they take?"

"They have butchered the crews of some small vessels."

"But have you seen this critter?" asked Capt. Barnard.

"No, thank God, I haven't," was the response. "But when I first saw you I began to tremble. Your brig has about as saucy a look as any craft that floats. Them painted ports and your rakish masts kind o' put an impudent air on ye."

"The Ellen Maria is a beauty, said Barnard, enthusiastically. "I named her after my wife, and she's a beauty, too. But," he added, more seriously, "how did you learn about this cussed pirate?"

"We heard of her first in Havana. She chased a French barque almost under the very guns of the Moro. And then I met an English brig yesterday, that had picked up four men who had been compelled to 'walk the plank' by the same villains. These men were part of the crew of a Spanish trader. The pirate captured their vessel, and, after killing six of their men, made these four walk overboard."

"Thunder!" exclaimed Ira.

"I say thunder!" echoed his father. "It'll be thunder if we fall in with that chap. But I guess I can run away from him."

"Perhaps so," returned Sanders. "Your brig is a fast one, but the pirate is fast, too. However, you may not meet him."

"But what does he look like?"

"A topsail schooner, long and heavy, with new sails, and masts raking more than yours do."

"We'd better not say anything to the men about this," remarked Barnard, as he and his son pulled back to their vessel.

Ira thought the same; so they kept the matter of the pirate a secret while they could.

During the day the wind was from the westward, though not very fresh, the brig making not more than an average of six knots. Just as the sun was sinking below the horizon, one of the men reported a sail to the eastward. Capt. Barnard got his glass, and ere long he was able to make out that the strange craft was a topsail schooner, with new canvass, and very rakish masts.

"It's the pirate, sure as fate!" he whispered to his son.

"Do you think so?" returned Ira, trembling.

"I'm confident of it."

"The Lord help us!"

"But it's close on to night," said the old man, "and we may run away from him."

"Run away from what?" asked Jack Phipps, who had overheard the last remark.

"From that schooner," the skipper replied. "I don't like the looks of her."

Phipps was very inquisitive, for he had noticed the old man and Ira whispering together, and he mistrusted something, and finally he succeeded in getting the whole story.

Just as the sun disappeared below its bed of waters, Barnard got a fair view of the schooner, and he had no doubt left upon his mind. She answered exactly to the description Sanders had given him of the pirate, and she had changed her course, too. When first seen, she had been close-hauled upon the larboard tack, standing to the north'rd and west'rd, but now she had gone about, and was standing up towards the brig.

The men were nervous; but as night closed in, and the schooner was shut out from view, they hoped to run away. Some of them proposed to down with the helm and run for the coast. But the skipper said, no. He would stand on his course, and run the risk. The pirate would be as likely to run for the coast as any way.

"By jimmeny," uttered Phipps, "if we had men enough, Bill and I could get our drum and fife a going, and frighten 'em."

"Yes—and if we had men enough, we could fight 'em," returned the captain.

This seemed reasonable, so all hands united in wishing that they had plenty of men, and plenty of arms and ammunition.

A strict watch was kept, and at midnight Bill Sawyer discovered the schooner upon the lee quarter. He was in the main-top, and could just make out a dark mass upon the starlit water. Capt. Barnard went aloft with his night-glass—a powerful one, by the way—and he could see the schooner's masts clearly defined.

"She's overhauling us," he said, as he stepped upon the deck; "and," he added, reluctantly, "we are sailing as fast as we can. We have no more canvass to spread."

The crew were terror-stricken. There was no back-door to glide through, and no woods to hide in. They might do their utmost, and yet the sails could move them only so fast. At two o'clock the pirate's topmasts were clearly defined against the sky; and in an hour more the heads of her fore and main sails were seen. Captain Barnard paced his quarter-deck very uneasily. His position was a hard one. Had he not known the pirate from the description he had received of her, the fact of her chasing him thus would have been sufficient.

"Half-past three—and in less than an hour it will be daylight!" groaned the captain, in agony. "The pirate is overhauling us fast. Look—you can almost see her bulwarks!"

The men looked, and it was even as Barnard had said. The whole of the schooner's canvass was visible against the sky, and she carried a cloud of it, too. Once more the captain took his glass and went aloft. Just as he had gained the crosstrees a lantern was brought upon the schooner's deck and carried forward. As the light gleamed out upon surrounding objects, Barnard could see that the deck was swarming with men, and that most of them were forward, gazing after his vessel. He saw the gleam of knives and pistol-barrels, and also the heavy forms of two or three brass guns.

"It's all up!" he said, as he came down. "Her deck is full of men, and they are all armed to the teeth."

"How could you see?" asked Ira.

"A lantern was carried across the deck while I was aloft, and I saw plainly. Oh—if we only had men enough!"

"Make 'em!" said Jack Phipps.

"Make 'em? I wish to the Lord I could."

"Make 'em out of shooks," pursued Phipps.

The captain gazed upon the speaker, but said nothing. He was thinking the matter over.

"Make your men, and then let me and Bill play the drum and fife."

Phipps and Bill Sawyer had formerly been musicians for a military company, and when they engaged with Capt. Barnard, they took their drum and fife with them, and when the mood was upon them, they used to play for their mates to dance.

The skipper soon comprehended the whole scheme, and ere long made arrangements for putting it in operation. It was very evident that the pirate would overhaul them in a few hours if they kept on thus, and unless some stratagem could be successfully carried out they were doomed. It would be daylight in less than an hour, so it was necessary that they should work smartly.

The hatches were thrown off, and forty shooks passed up from the hold, and so arranged that the main sail would hide them from the pursuer while the brig stood on her present course. As soon as this was done the men ransacked their chests, and every conceivable article of clothing the brig could afford was brought forth. Some of the shooks were dressed in jackets, some in frocks, while others had to put up with old trowsers drawn down over them. Hats and caps were fashioned from strips of tarpaulin, and when this article failed recourse was had to bits of canvass.

When the wooden men were thus rigged out, they were arranged so as to make as much show as possible, and yet hide their true character. Some were set up against the lee bulwarks, some against the long-boat, and some propped up in the gangway by means of chocks and lashings. In fact, these innocent bundles of staves made quite a formidable appearance. Barnard was well aware that they could not stand the full light of day, but he meant to have them perform their duty in the dusky gray of early dawn.

The arrangements were all made just as the first streaks of the coming day were visible in the east. The schooner could be now plainly seen, and she was not more than a mile distant. The forms of many men could be dimly seen about her bows, and their motions seemed to indicate that they were eager for their prey.

The wind had hauled a little to the southward during the night, so that the brig was now very near upon a taut bowline, with her starboard tacks aboard.

"Ready about!" cried Barnard, as the eastern sky grew red.

"Aye, aye," responded Ira, who had the helm.

"Helm's a-lee!" continued the captain.

The tacks and sheets were raised high enough to clear the wooden men, and in a very few moments the brig was upon the larbord tack, with the pirate not over half a mile distant, the main sail still hiding the grotesquely attired shooks.

At length the vessels were near enough to answer the purpose, and Phipps brought forth his drum, while Sawyer attended with his fife. A long, heavy roll was rattled out, the sharp, shrill notes of the fife mingling with it, and while the startling sound went piercing through the air, they struck up the reveille, and played it in right good earnest.

Thus far the brig had been standing obliquely across the schooner's fore-foot, but as the reveille was sounded, her helm was put up, and as she fell off the mainsail was clewed up, thus revealing the wooden men.

It was very soon evident that the pirates were alarmed. The sound of the drum and fife had startled them, for surely no vessel save a man-of-war would have such accompaniments. But when they saw the crowd of seeming men, who appeared to have just come up at the sound of the call, they fancied that they had come very near catching a Tartar.

"Hi-yi!" cried Ira, clapping his hands, "they are off! These staves have scared 'em!"

And so it proved, for no sooner had the pirates heard the last of the music, and seen the *staving* crew of the brig, than they put their vessel before the wind and spread her sails "wing-and-wing." The brig at once gave chase, and kept it up for over four hours; but at the end of that time the pirate was far out of the way, and Capt. Barnard concluded to give it up.

"It's no use," he said. "We might as well put about on our course, and send our spare men below."

"Aint it best to play the *retreat*?" asked Phipps.

"Yes. Play the retreat," returned Barnard, "and then we'll let these poor soldiers turn in."

So the drummer and fifer once more awoke the air with their startling notes, and when they had finished the shooks were undressed, the hatches removed, and the disrobed auxiliaries sent below.

The Ellen Maria reached Havana in safety, and Capt. Barnard grew fat in telling how he had frightened and *staved* off the pirate.

WAITING.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

I sit by the window and try to read,
But my thoughts to the volume I give no heed;
They are out, like birds, in the shady grove,
Watching and waiting for him I love.
My breast keeps swelling with lonely sighs,
My heart looks out from my tear-filled eyes.
Through the livelong day and the evening dim,
I have listened, and waited, and watched for him;
And my heart seems bursting with longings vain,
And my head is throbbing with heavy pain;
And yet if I tell him how hard to bear
These lengthening seasons of absence are,
I know he will chide me, and call me weak—
Ah me! *it is easy reproof to speak;*
But *can he restore to my aching heart,*
The hope and the peace that he bade depart?

"LOVE BEGETS LOVE."

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

Sometimes it does; not *always*. Ah, no! The experience of many an unlucky lover may be briefly comprehended in this one saying: "The more I loved her, the more she wouldn't love me." And it's a world-known fact that there is no better reason desired for a man to be forever unwilling and unable to love a woman than that "she is too willing."

Many a girl has felt quite a partiality for the company of a youth until he gave her reason to believe that his thoughts were of something more than friendship, and *then* she has felt an involuntary repugnance towards him spring up in her heart. It seems a most perverse and cruel working of nature that such things should be; but they *are so*; and 'tis vain to deny it. Even among children the same thing is seen. Katy loves Susan dearly, and is never so happy as when in her company; but Susan would do anything short of breaking her neck to keep out of Katy's way. Willie admires and loves Fred, and can't refrain from following him about; but Fred is fretted almost to desperation by "the everlasting tagging of that wall-eyed Will."

The "congeniality" is too often *all on one side*. Alas for the longing heart, whether of child or adult, whose Mecca and Mahomet are still receding. Here is the family favorite—the idol of the entire household. Love flows for her like water; yet there is not a heart in all the family one half so cold as hers. Here is the public hero—the almost adored leader or orator—he is the chief treasure of hundreds—perhaps thousands of his fellow-creatures. They love him so much that they would almost make of their prostrate bodies a causeway over which he might walk to victory, or to some great happiness; but there is not one quickened heart-beat in his breast for them. He cares nothing for any of them. He looks upon them kindly, benevolently, as a whole; but as units they are no more to him than so many passing shadows on a wall. His interests and affections are spread out like gold leaf—he loves "the race" so much that he cares not a straw for any *man*. Hearts without number lie throbbing out their costliest offerings at his feet; those feet pass heedlessly among them and go on—not a single answering emotion swelling the heart they bear.

Does love beget love?

TERRIBLE AND ROMANTIC INCIDENT.

A Paris paper has the following story: A commercial traveler, whom business frequently called from Orleans to Paris—M. Edmund D———, was accustomed to go to a hotel, with the landlord of which he was acquainted. He arrived a few weeks ago at the hotel, where he was in the habit of staying. One evening after supper he invited the people of the hotel to go to his chamber to take coffee, and he promised to tell them a tale full of dramatic incident. On entering the room, his guests saw on a bed, near which he seated himself, a pair of pistols. "My story," said he, "has a sad *denouement*, and I require the pistols to make it clearly understood." As he had always been accustomed, in telling his tales, to indulge in expressive pantomime, and to take up anything which lay handy calculated to add to the effect, no surprise was felt at his having prepared pistols. He began by narrating the loves of a young girl and a young man. They had both, he said, promised, under the most solemn oaths, inviolable fidelity. The young man, whose profession obliged him to travel, once made a long absence. While he was away he received a legacy, and on his return hastened to place it at her feet. But on presenting himself before her he learned that, in compliance with the wishes of her family, she had just married a wealthy merchant. The young man thereupon took a terrible resolution. "He purchased a pair of pistols like these," he continued, taking one in each hand; "then he assembled his friends in his chamber, and after some conversation placed one under his chin in this way, as I do, saying, in a joke, that it would be a pleasure to blow out his brains; and at the same moment he pulled the trigger." Here he discharged the pistol, and his head was shattered to pieces. The unfortunate man told his own story.

◆

Female Purity.—All the influence which women enjoy in society—their right to the exercise of that maternal care which forms the first and most indelible species of education; the wholesome restraint which they possess over the passions of mankind; their power of protecting us when young, and cheering us when old—depend so entirely upon their personal purity, and the charm which it casts around them, that to insinuate a doubt of its real value is wilfully to remove the broadest corner-stone on which civil society rests, with all its benefits and all its comforts.

"MEET HIM WITH A SMILE."

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

Harp away there, ye precious advisers of women in general, and wives in particular, we are all attentive to your dulcet lays; or, to drop the figure, *of course*, we shall attend to all your good advice, and profit thereby.

We *might* set up a plea that 'tis hard work to look delighted, and to act as if we were "tickled to death" when every thing all over the house has gone wrong all day; when the children have all been sick and cross; the "help" out of sorts, and dangerous to be spoken to; our own head, and limbs, and teeth, all aching; and the week's mending all undone. We *might* say that it is extremely difficult to get up, even the shadow of a smile, when—and half of us mothers feel so half of our time—we are so unutterably weary that our eyes feel as if sinking backward into our skull, and our whole mortal frame and immortal disposition appear to us to have "caved in." We *might* do this; but then, would it be *becoming* to endeavor to show cause why we should not be expected to be, at all times, sunshiny and angelic? Hadn't we better swallow our reason, and submit to the prescrption of the everlasting grin?

Yes—certainly; for the end of our existence is to secure the love of man; and man don't, and wont, and can't love a woman that don't look sweet and happy. How can he? It isn't natural.

So let the case be what it may, when our husband's returning time draws near, let's get the smiles under way—so that he may read upon our lips a flat denial of the tale told by the premature lines upon our brow, the hollows in our cheeks, and our sunken eye.

Isn't it enough that he should be so unfortunate as to find that the fair and blooming girl, whose fresh beauty he expected would, for many care-free years, rejoice his eyes, has become the pale and faded woman? Can it be supposed that he will, also, brook the quenching of her smiles? Don't let us tax man's patience too far; for, truth to tell, it snaps often like twine in the blaze of a candle. Hark! what was that low murmur? What did you say, sister?

"When our strength, our beauty, and our joyous spirits have all failed because of *him*, wherefore should he not weep with us, instead of demanding of us eternal silence as to our grief, and a perpetual smile? Why should he not love and cherish us all the more tenderly for what we have suffered, and must suffer still, as well as for our gayety and smiles?"

Absurd, my sister! How can you dream of such a thing? What does a man know or care about feminine distresses? Never mention them to him, if you would not tire him of your company. Whatever the troubles of the household, of your mind, of your body, don't you go to "complaining" before your lord and master. Cover all these things in your own heart, and, above all things, never forget to "meet him with a smile" when he comes home. Clap on that "indispensable" the instant you hear his step; let it be as handy as a cape-bonnet, so that he may never catch you unawares; and then, when you can no longer endure, alone and unpitied, the burden which grows year by year heavier and sorer, just give your husband one more smile, and lie down and die, and he will weep over you, and say—

"She was a sweet, smiling vision, but she has passed; where shall I find another like her?" and a few months will, *probably*, answer that question to his *apparent* satisfaction.

"Meet him with a smile."

THE BRAVE MAN.

There is nothing which a truly brave and persevering man may not accomplish. Heat and cold, mountains and seas, and sunshine, are alike to him, when he is bent upon his object. He pushes ahead—never tiring or fainting—until his proud design is achieved. Whether it be riches or honor, he permits no obstacle to impede his purpose. The histories of all distinguished men, from Alexander to Napoleon, show that it was perseverance that made them distinguished above their fellow-men. And you, young man, if determined in your course, whatever end you have in view, shall be respected and honored. Never permit your energies to slumber, but be ever active in whatever field you choose to labor. To lag—to stop—to doubt—to hang your head in fear, will prove disastrous to your best interests.

"To move in doubt and fear
And tremble at the shade of even—
What is it but a tomb to rear
And stealing to it, turn from Heaven?"

The reason why so many turn out miserable tools—without ambition, life, or even wealth—is their lack of courage and their fear of the world. What has an honest man, or a man of virtue and integrity, to fear? All are but shadows that look dark, and forbidding before you—and these vanish before the light of truth and generous ambition. Let nothing stay your progress when you are in the right path—nothing but the strong arm of death—then you will accomplish your bright expectations, while—

————"Shadows fly,
And hope gleams beauteous from afar—
A sea of glory fills the sky,
And wisdom beams in every star."

A MOTHER'S TEARS.

There is a touching sweetness in a mother's tears, when they fall upon the face of her dying babe, which no eye can behold without imbibing its influence. Upon such a hallowed ground the foot of profanity dares not approach. Infidelity itself is silent, and forbears its scoffings. And here woman displays not her weakness but her strength; it is that strength of attachment which can never, in its full intensity, be realized. It is perennial, dependent upon no climate, no changes—out alike in storm and sunshine—it knows no shadow of turning. A father, when he sees his child going down to the dark valley, will weep when the shadow of death has fully come over him; and, as the last parting knell falls on his ear, he may say: "I go down to the grave of my son mourning." But the hurry of business draws him away; the tear is wiped from his eye, and if, when he turns from his fireside, the vacancy in the family circle reminds him of his loss, the succeeding day blunts the poignancy of his grief, until at length it finds no permanent seat in his breast. Not so with her who has borne and nourished the tender blossom. It lives in the heart where it was first entwined in the dreaming hours of night. She sees its playful mirth or hears its plaintive cries, she seeks it in the morning, and goes to the grave to weep there.

◆

Numbers engage their lives and labors, some to heap together a little dirt that shall bury them in the end; others to gain an honor, that at best can be celebrated but by an inconsiderable part of the world, and is envied and calumniated by more than it is truly given.

FEMALE BEAUTY.

The ladies of Arabia stain their fingers and toes red, their eye-brows black, and their lips blue. In Persia they paint a black streak around the eyes, and ornament their faces with various figures. The Japanese women gild their teeth, and those of the Indians paint them red. The pearl of the teeth must be dyed black to be beautiful in Guzurat. The Hottentot women paint the entire body in compartments of red and black. In Greenland the women color their faces with blue and yellow, and they frequently tattoo their bodies by saturating threads in soot, inserting them beneath the skin, and then drawing them through. Hindoo females, when they wish to appear particularly lovely, smear themselves with a mixture of saffron, turmeric, and grease. In nearly all islands of the Pacific and Indian oceans, the women, as well as the men, tattoo a great variety of figures on the face, the lips, tongue, and the whole body. In New Holland they cut themselves with shells, and keeping the wounds open a long time form deep scars in the flesh, which they deem highly ornamental. And another singular mutilation is made among them by taking off, in infancy, the little finger of the left hand, at the second joint. In ancient Persia, an aquiline nose was often thought worthy of the crown; but the Sumatran mother carefully flattens the nose of her daughter. Among some of the savage tribes of Oregon, and also in Sumatra and Arracan, continual pressure is applied to the skull in order to flatten it, and thus give it a new beauty. The modern Persians have a strong aversion to red hair; the Turks, on the contrary, are warm admirers of it. In China small round eyes are liked; and the girls are continually plucking their eye-brows, that they may be thin and long. But the great beauty of a Chinese lady is in her feet, which, in childhood, are so compressed by bandages as effectually to prevent any further increase in size. The four smaller toes are turned under the foot, to the sole of which they firmly adhere; and the poor girl not only endures much pain, but becomes a cripple for life. Another mark of beauty consists in finger-nails so long that casings of bamboo are necessary to preserve them from injury. An African beauty must have small eyes, thick lips, a large flat nose, and a skin beautifully black. In New Guinea the nose is perforated, and a large piece of wood or bone inserted. In the north-west cost of America an incision more than two inches in length is made in the lower lip, and then filled with a wooden plug. In Guiana the lips are pierced with thorns, the heads being inside the mouth, and the points resting on the chin.

DANGER OF PRECOCIOUS DEVELOPMENT.

There can be no doubt that many a child has been sacrificed in early youth to the pride of parents, who, delighted with the intellectual activity of their children, have striven to make them prodigies of learning. By these cases of early and undue employment of the brain, inflammation of the hemispherical ganglion, or the living membrane of the ventricles, with serous effusion, has usually been the cause of either a fatal issue, or of subsequent mental imbecility. A late distinguished physician related to us an interesting case of this kind. An extremely intelligent boy, of about twelve years of age, was brought to him for phrenological examination, (the doctor being skilled in that science,) by a parent who was very proud of the intellectual endowments of his child. The physician gave his opinion of the boy's character, at the same time cautioning the father of the dangerous course he was pursuing. But the father's reply was—"All that other boys considered labor and hard study were merely child's play to him; that his studies could not be hurting to him, he employed them so much." Again the doctor endeavored to save the child, but the father would not attend to the warning. Two years from that time the father again called on the doctor, and in reply to his inquiries about the child, his father burst into tears—his child was an idiot.

NEVER DO IT.

Never ask the age of an unmarried lady when she is past five-and-twenty.

Never expose your poverty to a rich relation, if you would have him treat you as a cousin.

Never let it come to the ears of a rich and childless relative that you secretly pray for his sudden and premature dissolution.

Never speak of the gallows to a man whose father or grandfather has been hanged; nor of the corruption of office-holders to a Government defaulter.

Never speak of the "time that tried men's souls" to one of Tory ancestry; nor of the battle of New Orleans to one who thinks the army of England invincible.

Never attempt to quiz a man in company who might retort by kicking you down stairs.

Never let your friend know, when you drop in to take a friendly dinner with him, that your landlady "blocked the game" on you, because you had not paid over your last week's board.

Never impose secresy upon a man to whom you communicate anything in confidence; he is sure to tell it to some friend, if you do.

BUSINESS COURTESY.

Nothing more certainly marks the gentleman than the observance of a uniform courtesy and kindness in the business of life. Such a bearing toward all men should be cultivated till it grows to be a habit. Sure, kind words are as abundant, and cost no more than harsh ones. Many a man has robbed himself of success by an austere and haughty manner. Such an address chills those whom interest attracts, and impairs a confidence that might become almost fond. There is nothing like a quiet, gentle, and polite manner in business. Petulance and passion grow worse by indulgence, and unfit their professor for pleasant intercourse with his fellows. But every gentleman has a right to demand and receive courteous treatment at the hands of those with whom he may deal. He is worse than a boor who purposely and coolly refuses to extend it.

BUSINESS.

The experience of all demonstrates that a regular systematic business is essential to the health, happiness, contentment, and usefulness of man. Without it he is uneasy, unsettled, miserable, and wretched. His desires have no fixed aim, his ambition no high and noble ends. He is the sport of visionary dreams and idle fancies—a looker-on where all are busy, a drone in the hive of industry, a moper in the field of industry and labor. If such were the lot of the feeble and helpless only, it were less to be deplored, but it is sadly otherwise.

◆

Live Uprightly.—The poor pittance of seventy years is not worth being a villain for. What matter is it if your neighbor lies in a splendid tomb? Sleep you with innocence. Look behind through the track of time; a vast desert lies open in retrospect; through this desert your fathers have journeyed; wearied with tears and sorrows they sink from the walks of man. You must leave them where they fall, and you are to go a little farther, where you will find eternal rest.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1858.

Our only terms.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. It will be useless for parties to write us insisting on our taking large clubs at lower rates. An elegant family paper like the Ledger, (containing no advertisements, and beautifully illustrated,) cannot be afforded at less than these terms. We always stop the paper at the expiration of the year, or the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, you should renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper. The notes of all specie-paying banks taken at par. When a draft or check can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail.

All Letters containing subscriptions, or in any way relating to either the editorial or business department of the paper, must be addressed to Robert Bonner, New York Ledger office, No. 44 Ann street, New York. We will not guarantee the delivery of the paper when parties subscribe to any agent. Always send your money direct to this office, and be careful to give us the name of the Post-office, County, and State, to which you wish the paper sent.

No Travelling Agents.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends hereafter to act as such you can put him down as a swindler. The best way to get our paper is at the book and periodical stores; but if you happen not to be within reach of one, then you can send us two dollars, and we will mail it to you.

FAME.

What an endless struggle, since the foundation of the world, men have indulged in for fame. Some for a pure and noble fame—for a name honorable and sweet in the memory of generations; some for renown, indifferent whether pure or tarnished—renown written upon columns, temples and tombs, trophies raised by the blood and sweat of slaves; and some for notoriety—the Empedocles and Sam Patches of our race. Sesostris, writing his name on granite, "King of Kings;" Alexander, demi-deified at Ammon; Cheops, remembered for his pyramid; Boswell, lifted into remembrance by the skirts of Johnson. Infinite the variety! The desire for fame—to survive forgetfulness and override oblivion, has cost mankind seas of blood and ages of agony and sorrow. Fierce and cruel wars have been born of it; fiery desolations have raged on its track; love, truth and justice have perished, and millions have bared their necks to exalt its possessors. History is little more than the foul story of ambitious strife for fame—for higher place and wider-known name.

Yet how few of the strugglers are remembered; and of these most have their measure of infamy. By no means is memory among men always desirable. Time is an avenger, closely sifting the remembered—setting the notorious and the infamous wide apart from the nobly famed. Better for Nero had he been forgotten; better for Alva had he been unknown; better for Arnold had he never been born. But it is glorious to win the fame of a Howard or a Washington—to be not only remembered, but also reverenced and beloved—to leave a name fragrant in the world's heart. This is true renown, worthy of all struggle and of the highest ambition. These are the great, the imperishable names, outliving pillar, and temple, and tomb. Next to these are the good names—names of the pure and just of earth, which, though forgotten by history, and ungraven upon brass or marble, are written on the everlasting record of virtue—in the book of God. Better to win a place among these, than to be notorious on the page of history, or remembered infamously among men. Better be humbly good than ignobly great; better far be a Howard than a Cæsar. "A good name," says the wise man, "is rather to be chosen than great riches."

LIKELY TO BE FULFILLED.

The prediction of the French *savant*, that the earth with the present season would enter on a succession of mild winters, seems likely to be fulfilled so far as the starting point is concerned. So mild a December has not been witnessed within our recollection, and January opened in the same spirit. However it may be as to the theory that a continuous snow-blanket refreshes and recuperates the earth, and improves it to the farmer's hand, no one can doubt that the absence of said blanket has been an incalculable blessing to ill-housed and ill-fed thousands in our midst. The mild winter has been to such food, fuel and raiment, for which let us be thankful to the All-provident hand of the "Master of Life." Ice is a great luxury during the "heated terms," but if the worst fears of the ice-croakers should be realized, there will have been blessings enough won by the poor, who consume but little of that article, to more than balance the discomfort of the rich, who can command it from the "frigid East." A friend writes us from the country that the earth round about him was plough-a-ble on New-year's day, and that he plucked violets out of doors on the 15th of January.

IS CHOLERA COMING?

Some of our medical men have raised the alarm of "Cholera next Summer." They say the cholera has always come, on its former visits, after such winters as the present. Also, that its breaking out in Russia last season is a premonitory symptom of its crossing the Atlantic next summer. We do not put any faith in these croakings, and only refer to them for the purpose of saying that all who are temperate and tidy need have no fears of cholera or other epidemics.

☞ A good deal of the poetry of life is in paying one's debts.—*Exchange Paper.*

This is a fact; but aside from the poetry of the thing, we wish every one would pay his honest debts. A vast amount of trouble would be avoided by *paying as you go*. Reader, if you wish to live a decent, comfortable life, always pay your debts *promptly*—don't allow yourself to be "dunned" half a dozen times for every little petty bill. By so doing, *some* of you will save *us* a deal of trouble.

Bear it in Mind.—We invariably stop the Ledger at the expiration of the time for which subscribers have paid. This is our rule, and we think it is more satisfactory to subscribers, as by this method they will in no case run in arrears, and will never be subject to the payment of back debts in the shape of subscriptions. Therefore, old subscribers will see the necessity of renewing as soon as the time for which they have paid expires.

ON THE THRESHOLD.

Progressed as our age is in knowledge—in popular intelligence, and the arts and sciences—there are not a few, but many, who believe that the human mind and the human race are only on the threshold of intellectual achievement. It would seem, with the application of steam and lightning, that but small triumph over the material world remained. More than the Syracusan dreamed, we have accomplished, and yet there are constantly budding forth enterprises, or thoughts of enterprise, that seem for the moment more titanic than human. But the wonder about them soon subsides in this age of wonders, and ere their novelty is fairly passed, more wonderful things are born.

The idea of under-wiring the oceans, now, is less speculative than the first proposition to transmit thought by lightning was deemed. The "Great Eastern" steamer, capacitated to float an army, is scarcely as extraordinary as was the first craft impeelled across the Atlantic, "in defiance of wind and tide." Even when a "stupendous" undertaking, like an ocean telegraph, fails for a moment, the world does not hoot as of old. The peoples of Christendom have come to believe that "almost anything is possible." Galileo and Fulton would not be imprisoned and derided in our day. In truth, too much is expected of the genius of our times, and he who cannot very nearly perform a miracle with machinery, need not think to become a "raree show." To abridge the labor of man ten, or a hundred fold, is the commonest expectation of the public of him who rigs wheels and springs to harvest the fields, or fabricate the raw material thereof.

It is the vision of a multitude, of not "distempered minds," that nature holds subtler forces in her bosom than the world yet wots of, and that their discovery will come when we have outgrown our steam and lightning. Be this as it may, we may well be prepared, in view of the mental activities in pursuit of larger truth and light, for anything. The Cæsars who marched up and down the world conquering material for Greek or Roman empire, may have fancied themselves the greatest of conquerors. They were not, for in our day the nations, and nature herself, are being overcome to upbuild the empire of humanity, and something of the large spoil of this mighty, peaceful, universal conquest, is carried to the cabin of the poorest man, as well as to the palaces of kings. The progress of our age is not in the direction of any particular race or state—it diverges from the centre, where Christendom stands crowned with splendors, and irradiates the world. The remotest boundaries—far beyond the "pillars of Hercules" and the columns whereon the proud Egyptian wrote, "Sesostris, king of kings and lord of lords"—feel its thrills and inspirations, prophetic of the coming day that is to swallow up and glorify this dawn of perfect time.

CLIMATIC CHANGES.

Though some observers contend that the cultivation of the earth produces no material effect upon the temperature of climates, we are inclined to a different conclusion. As regarding the winter season, particularly, we are quite satisfied that it has been more or less modified by the processes of civilized life—by the felling of forests, draining of marshes, and tillage of fields. It is well known that the snow falls to a greater depth and lingers longer in forest regions, than in the open country of the same latitude, and that marshy low-lands are colder than dry soil equally low. New England and Canada winters are acknowledged to have become milder under the influence of settlement, and we think the same result is true of our own regions. It is very possible that, occasionally, we have as violent extremes of temperature as in former times, when the country was but little settled, but it is the prevailing opinion that our American winters are aggregatively milder than of old. The same is true of climate the world over.

In the time of Roman dominion in Europe, the more important German and Pannonian rivers were frequently ice-bound—indeed, the Cæsars found the winters more hostile than the barbarians—whereas they are now seldom frozen. Hereabouts, it will not require "the memory of the oldest inhabitant" to recall the period when we had something like uniformity of winters, and could reasonably count on more or less sleighing. It is not so now, however. And since winters are seasons of privations and distress, in proportion to their severity, may we not regard their increasing mildness as one of the tributes of Providence to human industry and civilization—as hopeful signs of that millennial time, when the desert is to be glad and the wilderness blossom as a rose. Certainly the thousands of poor in our midst have to be devoutly thankful for the thus far mildness of the present winter. It has been worth more to them than many thousands of dollars.

COMMODORE PAULDING.

Commodore Hiram Paulding, whose name has been made specially famous by his recent capture and sending to the United States of the great filibuster, General William Walker, is a son of the John Paulding who assisted in the capture of Major Andre, and brother of James K. Paulding, well known as one of the elder American *literati*, and who was Mr. Van Buren's Secretary of the Navy. Commodore Paulding, would seem, therefore, to come naturally by his capturing proclivities, and from all we have heard of him we doubt not he would, in case of war on the ocean, add to the laurels of our navy. He is about sixty years old, and has spent his life in the service of his country. His present command completes, we believe, his round of the squadrons, and he is therefore entitled to retire from the service (save in case of war) upon full pay. The commodore has long resided in the town of Huntington, on the Sound shore of Long Island, where, during his furloughs, he cultivates his farm and enjoys the respect of all who know him. Among his near neighbors is Churchill C. Cambreleng, Mr. Van Buren's Minister to Russia. Commodore Paulding has two sons, one of whom holds rank in the navy, and is his secretary, and four daughters—altogether a happy and admired family, as known by the circle of their familiar acquaintance.

A JUST CAUSE OF COMPLAINT.

Mr. Bonner:—Sir—I wish to make a complaint to you, which is as follows: Whenever we residents of Brooklyn buy the Ledger at the ferry on our side of the river, for the purpose of enjoying its perusal while crossing, the first thing that catches our eye on opening the paper, is an advertisement of some "fashionable tailor," "circulating library," or "enterprising newsdealer," stamped on the top margin. No doubt this is very well for the advertiser, but not so to the buyer of the Ledger, particularly if he wishes to keep it on file, or to have it bound, or to send it to some friend, so we have to buy our Ledgers in New York. This using the Ledger for such advertising is *mean*. Can't you put a stop to it? Truly yours, Americus.

The remedy for this evil is in the buyers' own hands. If a few of them should refuse to buy Ledgers so stamped, the venders would stamp no more. The fear of being "stuck"—as the trade say—with a lot of stamped papers, would infallibly prevent a dealer from committing such an outrage.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

WHAT I HATE.

Chiefest of all sublunary abominations, is the slatternly woman. I blame no man who rushes from a home whose mistress, habitually and from choice, pours out his coffee in curl-papers or tumbled hair, dingy, collarless morning gown, and slip-shod feet. If there is any time when a pretty woman looks prettier than at any hour in the twenty-four, it is in a neat breakfast-toilette with her shining bands of hair, and nice white petticoat peeping from a breakfast-robe, (calico, if you like, provided it fit well, and the color be well chosen); and if there is a time when a plain woman comes the nearest to being handsome, it is in this same lovable, domestic dress.

I will maintain that the coffee and eggs taste better, and that the husband goes more smilingly and hopefully to his day's task, after helping such a wife to bread and butter. I could never comprehend the female slattern—thank heaven there are few of them—or understand how a woman, though she had no eye to please but her own, should not be scrupulously neat in all the different strata of her apparel; and certainly in these days, when no omnibus can drive up to a ferry-house, without encountering an expectant body-guard of male ankle-connoisseurs, waiting to see hurried ladies alight, who shall say that a trim gaiter-boot or nicely fitting stocking wastes its trimness or is unappreciated?

I repeat it, I blame no man from rushing in disgust from a house whose mistress is a slattern; who never pays her husband the compliment to look decent in her person or in her house, unless company is expected; who reserves her yawns and old dresses for her husband, and strikes an attitude for his male friends; whose pretty carpets are defaced with spots; whose chairs are half dusted; whose domestic dinners are uneatable; whose table-cloth, castor, and salt-cellars are seldom regenerated; and whose muslins look as if they had been dipped in saffron.

Not to speak of the *wastefulness* of this crying fault: bonnets, shawls and cloaks will not long retain their beauty if left on chairs or tables over night, instead of being carefully put away; bracelets and brooches are not improved by being trodden upon, or ribbons and laces by being hastily wisped into a corner. To such an extreme do I carry my horror of an untidy woman, that I would almost refuse to believe in the virtue of such an one. Not that I admire the woman who is always at her husband's heels with a brush and a dust-pan; who puts him under the harrow if he does not put his boots under the scraper before entering the parlor; who is in fits if his coat is not hung upon the left side of the door instead of the right; who, when he has but ten minutes to spare after breakfast to enjoy the morning paper, drives him out of his comfortable corner by the fire, to brush up a spoonful of ashes on the hearth; who is always "righting," as she calls it, his own particular den, which I am convinced all husbands must be allowed to enjoy, neck deep in confusion unmolested, if their wives wish the roof to stay on.

I once had the misfortune to live in the house with such a female, whose husband roosted half his in-door time on top of a table, to keep clear of the mop. How her cap-strings flew through the doors; what galvanised broomsticks she wielded; how remorselessly she ferreted out closets, and disembowelled cupboards; how horribly she scraped glass and paint; and how anxious she looked to begin again when it was all done. How I slunk behind doors, and dodged behind screens, and jumped out of windows, to get out of the vixen's way; and how I sat swinging in the elm tree in the orchard at a safe distance till the whirlwind was past.

Good gracious! how that india-rubber woman would go to baking after she had done cleaning, and to ironing after she had done baking, and to sewing after she had done both; how vindictively she twitched her needle through, as if she wished it were some live thing that she might make it feel weariness and pain. How like whipt spaniels her children looked; and what a reverence they had for washing and ironing days; how remorselessly she scrubbed their noses up and down of a Sunday morning, and shoved them into their "meetin-clothes," turning the pockets carefully inside out, to see that no stray bit of string, or carnal marble, or fish-hook remained, to alleviate the torture of the long-drawn seventeenthlies of the parson's impracticable discourse.

Still this female gave her husband light bread to eat; his coffee and tea were always strong and hot; he might have shaved himself by the polish of the parlor table; his buttons were on his shirts, and his stockings always mended; but the man—and he was human—might as well have laid his night-cap beside a sewing-machine. And oh, the weary details of roasting, baking and broiling to which he was compelled to listen and approve between the pauses. The messes, which in any other female hands but hers, would inevitably have stewed over or burnt up or evaporated. The treasure he had in her, culinarily and pecuniarily, though he didn't know it!

What I want to know is this:

Must a model housekeeper always have thin lips, thick ankles, a bolster-figure, and a fist like an overgrown beet? Need she take hold of her children as if total depravity were bristling out of every hair of their heads? Need the unhappy cat always take its tail under its arm and creep into the ash-hole whenever she looks at it? *Is* a sweet temper fore-ordained to be incompatible with sweet cupboards? Would it be unchristian to strangle such females with their own garters?

I pause for a reply. Fanny Fern.

AN EDITOR'S DIFFICULTY.

For the first time in our editorial career we are perplexed. We have a subject for a paragraph, and we don't know how to treat it. We can't make the pen move—it refuses to leave a trace of ink on paper unless we select another topic. Reader, what do you suppose the obnoxious subject is that produces such obstinacy on the part of our pen? Why it is this: We are acquainted with a clever, whole-souled fellow, who, having been married some time, was blessed (!) a few weeks since, with a fine, fat, healthy boy, and he wants us to write a "puff" for the new-comer. Now, we don't know how to do it, and as it has got to be done immediately, we don't know what to do.—Won't some of our more experienced contemporaries tell us how to treat this matter? *We* are young and bashful, and we want to accommodate our friend, and still we don't know how. Who will help us out of this dilemma? Will nobody come to our rescue? If we only knew as much about the "interesting" little gentleman as we do about his "daddy," our task would be an easy and a pleasant one; for then we could write a "puff," and a good one, without the least difficulty; but, as it is, we are in trouble. Who will come to our aid?

MODERN INVENTIONS.

The strongest witness the present age has to its superiority over the past, is the number and quality of its inventions. The classic Greek, surrounded by muse-haunted groves and monuments of incomparable art, had not the simple convenience of a cooking stove; and the luxurious Roman, lounging on the silks of Persia, amid marble baths and orange-scented villas, was compelled to burn a floating wick in an open censer of oil, to light and defile with smoke his splendid palaces. The spirit lamp, safety lamp, rotary stove, kitchen range, and ten thousand appliances that go to make up our labor-saving-machine system, and in which there are more usefulness and luxury than in all the purple of Tyre, or gold of Ophir, the haughty conquerors of eld knew nothing about.

The ancients seem to have countenanced, as base, the labor of relieving the common wants of life, and surrounding all with a portion of the plenty and ease monopolized by a few. Their great art was war, and their inventive faculties studied its successful prosecution. The spirit of our age is entirely different. We regard nothing as truly useful or beautiful that cannot be diffused to all. Our luxuries are divided between cottages and palaces, and the mind of our age has condescended to study the minute wants of the masses in its inventive struggle. And by this means it has destroyed the distinctions of classes so odious in the past. Our invention has not practiced at the command of a few who could shut it up for themselves. It has thrown itself out to all, furnishing the steps by which many a penniless man has strode past the possessor of millions.

We may not have chiseled the marble equal to Phidias, nor touched the canvass so tenderly as Apelles; but we have moulded marble and granite into far more useful shapes for the time being, and turned our brushes to protect and beautify our cottages, as the ancients never thought. We may not have developed the arts so sublimely, but we have turned them to more universal, practical account. The mystery of the Etruscan vases we unriddle in our commonest pottery, and the poorest farmer in the land has more means of domestic comfort and independence than Greek philosopher or Roman senator enjoyed. It is hardly possible now-a-days to keep pace with useful and cunning invention. By artificial processes nature is mocked, and we are presented with fac-similies of almost everything in creation. Wonderful are modern art and invention—framing iron horses for steam-spirits, and cross-wiring the earth that man may send the lightning of heaven on his errands.

KEEP IN THE COUNTRY.

While hundreds of idle people are seeking homes and employment in the country, and are even being helped by charitable associations to go to the Far West for the purpose, many of them young females, who are more reluctant to break up their city associations than males—there are not a few persons contemplating a change from the country to the city, and applying to their friends here to assist them in their projects! At this very moment there lies before us an application of this character, from a worthy but deluded country youth. He actually writes as if clerkships were going a begging for occupants all around us!

But foolish as this youth proves himself to be, he is acting a praiseworthy part, compared with that of some others, who come to the city on a wild-goose chase after "situations," without consulting anybody—come, alas! most of them, to find disappointment, poverty, bad habits, and, perhaps, utter ruin, instead of what they seek!

Some time ago, when the times were much better than now, and the chances for employment, in this city, correspondingly better, we said to this class of young adventurers, "Come not!" We now repeat our admonition with emphasis.

At the best of times, there is too much of a disposition to rush to the city. Persons who have health and comfort in their rural homes, come here for the worst, and to their sure sorrow in the future. We beseech all such to pause and think before doing so now. They may be tempted by assurances of assistance from well-meaning friends, and even by promises of employment, and yet be deceived, like many a one before them. Nothing short of positive engagements with employers of substance and standing in their respective lines, should be trusted to. Else they may find themselves the dupes of mere adventurers, who "flourish" for a season, and then fail without paying their employees.

The old homely saying, that one bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, applies well here. If our young rural friends can make out to "live" at present, while having the prospect of doing ever so slightly better hereafter, let them *stay in the country!*

FRETTING!

Fretting won't pay. To the contrary, it is always practiced at a loss of time, strength, and temper, ending in the greater loss of happiness.

Fretters are much more apt to practice their pernicious habit because of small matters than great ones. Nay, imaginary troubles are quite as apt to be the subject of their disquietude as real ones. And so, if they have nothing real to stew themselves over, they will conjure up something wherewith to make themselves miserable.

We have read an anecdote well calculated to show the folly of people fretting over their misfortunes. It told of a couple of gardeners, whose pea-crops had failed because of the frost, or some other adverse influence. One of them went about amongst his neighbors fretting, and insisting that he was "the most unlucky creature in existence." Some time afterwards, on visiting his unfortunate neighbor, and getting a glimpse of his garden, he exclaimed—

"What a fine crop of peas you have! How is this, that you have peas this year, and I none? I thought your planting was all for nought, like my own!"

"Precisely so," said the other. "But while you were fretting, I re-planted my crop!"

Fretting would not be so bad a habit, were its consequences confined to the fretter. But they are not. Fretters are almost certain to make their families and friends and neighbors unhappy. And so they become social nuisances, calling loudly for abatement.

Remember this, ye fretters, and fret no more!

Political Scandal.—The party papers are filled now-a-days with all manner of scandal. With the party editor every man who opposes his favorite candidate, or political creed, is a liar, a villain, and an enemy to the country; and this miserable stuff forms the great part of the contents of the political papers. Fine reading, truly, for a sensible, intelligent people! A friend inquired of us by letter the other day, why we did not say more about political matters in the Ledger. We don't know exactly what our friend meant by *political matters*, but if he refers to the trash with which political papers are chiefly filled, he will please excuse us for not dealing in political scandal.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Mountaineers are generally unconquerable, not so much on account of the defence afforded by their craggy hights, as from their patriotism and hardy habits. In high and barren places, man's occupations render him conversant with nature, an intercourse which attaches him to the mountain nymph, sweet Liberty. Highlanders, when worsted, are renovated, like Antæus, by a touch of their native earth, and so we might be, when attacked by the cares and sickliness of money-getting and money-spending, if we would quit the crowded cities, take a walk in the fields, and touch the fresh green earth. When the leafless and embittering metropolis turns our moral honey into gall, we may always reverse the process by straying among the flowers of the country.

It is easier to contract the vices of others than to impart to them our own virtues, just as it is easier to catch their diseases than to communicate to them our own good health. Our anxiety to avoid bodily infection can be exceeded only by our total indifference to that which is mental. There is a moral as well as a physical cholera, and yet, while we are half frightened to death at the approach of the one, we voluntarily expose ourselves, during our whole lives, to the attacks of the other.

Novelty, for the most part, is simply what we recover from oblivion. We can fish little out of the river Lethe that has not first been thrown into it. The world of discovery goes round without advancing, like a squirrel in its cage, and the revolution of one century differs little from that of its predecessor. New performers in new dresses mount the stage, but the piece and its accompaniments remain pretty much the same.

The prudent make the reverses by which they have been overthrown supply a basis for the restoration of their fallen fortunes, as the lava which has destroyed a house often furnishes the materials for rebuilding it. Fools and profligates, on the contrary, seek solace for their troubles by plunging into sensual and gross pleasures, as the wounded buffalo rolls himself vainly in the mud.

It is positively untrue that a preacher in one of our south-western States walked down the broad aisle during service on Sunday, and killed the deacon with a bowie knife for giving out the hymn, "Oh, 'tis a joyful sound," when the preacher announced his intention of leaving the State.

An insulting hypocrite of our acquaintance, who obtruded himself into a gentleman's house with a Bible in one hand and a prayer-book in the other, was unceremoniously kicked out. He undertook to avenge himself by circulating the story that the gentleman had *kicked the Bible and prayer-book out of his house.*

We see that a friend of ours in the South has been indicted for whipping a blackguard. We hope the verdict of the jury will be somewhat similar to that rendered in the case of a gentleman arraigned for shooting and crippling a vicious dog—"pay sixpence and have another shot at the dog."

There is a Turkish law that a man, for every falsehood he utters, shall have a red mark set on his house. If such a law were in force in the United States, we fear that some people who build fine houses might have their painting done with no expense except to their characters and consciences.

It is stated in the papers that a couple of Mormon apostles set out upon a tour with a Jew upon the plains some weeks ago, and that the Jew was afterwards found murdered, with a bloody axe at his side. We understand that the weapon was recognized as the axe of the Apostles.

In fishing, we have occasionally seen a big pike watching a bait, and evidently weighing the chances between getting a good dinner and *being* a good dinner. He should have been able to weigh very accurately—he had so many scales.

Mr. Hatcher, a gentleman of considerable talent, has advertised to bring out a volume of western poetry. Inasmuch as the poetical genius of the west seems to be yet in the egg, we are pleased to see that it is to have a Hatcher.

Poets have been called the "Johnny Horners" of the world, all except the pie with the thumb in it. They are crowded into the *corners* everywhere. The humblest newspaper has its poets' corner, and so has Westminster Abbey.

All men might be better reconciled to their fate if they would recollect that there are two kinds of misfortune at which we ought never to repine—that which we can, and that which we cannot remedy—regret being in the former case unnecessary, in the latter unavailing.

"Would you not love to gaze on Niagara forever?" said a romantic young girl to her less romantic companion. "Oh, no," said he, "I shouldn't like to have a cataract always in my eye."

The times at present are very hard, but the country is generally healthy. We believe that the only complaint extensively prevalent is a *stricture of the chest.*

Hydrophobia must be a particularly terrible thing in a Maine-liquor-law state—it being a dread of the only drink that the law allows a man.

The British soldiers found in Delhi an idol with large diamond eyes. That idol was unlike the ghost of Hamlet's father. It had *speculation* in its eyes.

"Pray, sir, why did you buy that lot beyond the cemetery?" "Oh, I wanted a good home beyond the grave."

He who finds pleasure in vice and pain in virtue is a novice in both.

See what I am, not what my father was, is an old and excellent Arab saying.

CURRENT ITEMS.

The last reports from Mormondom give an account of Brigham Young's having been frightened by one of his "forty beloved wives," who was taking a promenade in night attire, and whom the blustering Brigham mistook for a ghost, and fled from with shrieks of terror. This incident, trifling as it seems, has lowered the "Mormon prophet" very much in the estimation of some of his followers, who think that a man who cannot tell his own wife from a ghost cannot be much of a prophet.

A few Sabbaths since, at Port Byron, in this State, an honest-looking laborer arose in one of the churches just after the sermon, and pointing to a member of the church, told the clergyman he "had worked for that man for three months, at $13 a month, and that he refused to pay him." The clergyman politely replied that that was not the place to make such a complaint, but he would see what could and should be done about the matter. The occurrence caused a great sensation.

A publisher of a newspaper not a thousand miles from this city, who succeeded in getting several hundred dollars from country subscribers, by promising those who would send him the largest sum in advance by a specified time a prize of a silver tea-set worth seventy-five dollars, recently decamped with the funds, leaving his credulous subscribers to bite their thumbs with such indignation as their tempers shall prompt.

Armetta Bartholf, a young girl nineteen years of age, committed suicide a few days since at her residence in Sixth Avenue, by taking prussic acid. Her reason for taking this rash step, as stated in a letter left on her table, was to escape the horrors of a lingering death by starvation, her means being entirely exhausted and her health quite shattered

A Portuguese girl, fourteen years of age, fell overboard from a ship in the harbor of Havana a short time since, and before she could be rescued, a shark bit her body in two; and throwing up her arms with a terrible shriek, she sank beneath the blood-stained waters.

An elderly lady was knocked down at the corner of Broadway and Fulton street, a few days since, by the hub of an omnibus striking her, as the vehicle was dashing along at a rapid rate, and her left arm broken in two places, and her head seriously wounded.

Samuel Green, of Steuben county, in this State, was killed, a few days since, by the falling of a tree upon him, that his son, fourteen years of age, had cut down near by without giving his father warning.

A man in Louisville, Kentucky, who is spoken of as "a professional hog scalder," a few days since scalded one thousand three hundred and sixty-five hogs, out of one tub, in the short space of four hours and fifteen minutes.

The skeletons of four white men, two women, two boys and a girl were lately found on the western border of Missouri—the remains of some family of emigrants, that had there met with a common doom

A little daughter of Mrs. Mormann, a widow lady residing in the Third Avenue, a few mornings since, fell from the back third-story window to the basement area, and was instantly crushed to death.

Among the effects left by the Sultan of Muscat, recently deceased, was fifty thousand dollars in American dimes and half-dimes

NATURE AND ART ON THE HUDSON.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Stream of the North! beside thy noble tides
Dawns on the soul full many a mighty theme—
Thine then the adoring song, while brightly sweeps
Yon moon through silvery clouds like some calm dream
Through smiling slumbers, with melodious beam;
And far away, wrapp'd in a dewy rest,
The landscape stretches, and the azure stream
Rolls softly on beneath the drowsy West,
Like a blue vein that winds o'er sleeping Beauty's breast.

II.

Come thou when morning comes with many a smile,
Gemm'd with her dew, and rioting knee-deep
In the East's roses: kindles every isle,
And greenwood on the bank: from steep to steep,
From wave to wave the exulting sunbeams leap—
The stately ship, the barge, the light canoe,
The eagle wheeling round his ancient keep,
The islands glittering in the waters blue,
Hills, mountains, palisades all bursting on the view!

III.

Man not ungrateful, marked the scene, and Art
With Nature sparkles in a sweet embrace:
Here souls aweary of the troubled mart,
Have made them homes; and many a lofty place
Is white with walls that give romantic grace;
But chief thine Abbey, classic Paulding, stands,
Filled with the breath of old: awe-struck I trace
This gothic glory built by modern hands,
Yet looking like a pile that came from ancient lands:

IV.

And Tasso's harp peals down the gorge of years.
That strain he pondered in a prison's gloom;
And fire-wreathed Dante drops his iron tears
O'er Farinata in the burning tomb;
And sweet Boccacio comes all light and bloom,
The soul of Joy, the masker of his time;
And belted knights with glittering spear and plume;
And minstrels chanting many a martial rhyme
Of Cœur-de-Lion in India's holy clime!

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XI.

We once heard a very respectable widow lady, who had been thrice married, declare, in a little *wholesome advice* to her niece, who was on the eve of bestowing her hand upon an exceedingly worthy fellow of our acquaintance, that after an established recognized grievance, or a handsome income settled on herself, the next best advantage a wife could obtain was a cue to her husband's character—a key to unlock the innermost recesses of his heart, and deliver his secretly-cherished weaknesses and failings, bound hand and foot like so many helpless captives, to her discretion.

"Not that any right-minded woman," she judiciously added, perceiving that we had laid aside our book and were listening to her lecture, "would ever think of abusing her knowledge of them; certainly not, my love; still it is advisable to obtain it, on the same principle that an experienced general takes up a strong position in front of an ally whose intentions he is doubtful of."

That same day we came to a conclusion—mentally of course—never to place our affections upon any girl, be she ever so fair, who had a widowed aunt in her family, and have adhered to it ever since.

We know not whether Lady Boothroyd had been blessed with one of these experienced advisers, or if the intuitive perceptions of her sex led her, by a course of natural logic, to the same conclusions; but certain it is she practised the lesson just recited as successfully as if it had been inculcated in her girlhood's years. Her husband's weakness—unmanly fear for his personal safety—was cleverly acted on. Fletcher declared that he had seen and fired at a man concealed in the branches of the great elm directly opposite his master's chamber window; but before he could load again, the villian escaped.

Cowardice is proverbially credulous. How could Sir Norman do otherwise than believe him? Had he not heard the report of the gun himself?

Her ladyship's maid next gave notice to quit. The room she slept in fronted the park, and her nerves were delicate.

"The wretches!" exclaimed the chicken-hearted baronet. "I'll let the place; they are unworthy of having a resident landlord amongst them."

The inhabitants of St. Faith's were pretty much of the same opinion.

This was exactly what the artful woman required. It confirmed her husband in the resolution of quitting Meldown, which the raillery of Squire Blundell had somewhat shaken. She had long detested the country; it presented too narrow a field for talents such as here: London was their natural sphere; there they might find scope.

Orders were given to prepare for their departure.

A day or two before quitting the hall her ladyship announced her intention of taking a walk through the village. Sir Norman heard it with astonishment.

"What!" he exclaimed; "trust yourself in that den of poachers, assassins, and monsters!"

"I have no fear," replied his wife. "They entertain no feeling of animosity against me; it is your blood they thirst for."

"Miscreants!" ejaculated the baronet, with a shudder.

"Besides," added the lady, "we must not let them triumph in the idea of having driven or frightened us out of the place."

"Certainly not!" exclaimed the gentleman, emphatically. "Driven!" he repeated. "Who ever heard of a Boothroyd being driven! and as for fear, I trust that no ridiculously erroneous impression will be entertained respecting my motives in leaving Meldown."

His wife smiled.

"It is to spare the misguided wretches the perpetration of a horrible, unheard-of crime," continued the speaker, "that I consent to it. To show how little personal consideration has anything to do with it," he added, "I would willingly accompany you, but Dr. Phrase has insisted on my keeping my room."

"I require no escort," answered her ladyship, who had her own motives for going alone; "and repeat that I have nothing to dread: my terrors are for you."

As the speaker quitted the apartment, Sir Norman mentally asked himself whether it was the unsettled amount of his wife's jointure which caused this unusual anxiety. And if not that, what other motive could possibly have led to it; for even his vanity was not sufficiently egregious to attribute it to love—a dream they had both long since awakened from.

Lady Boothroyd's first visit was to the cottage of the weaver. She wished to judge with her own eyes whether the hints of the old steward arose from vague surmises, the whisperings of a startled conscience, or were founded on any positive resemblance between the orphan Lillian, and the unfortunate Allan.* Not that the result in either case would affect her plans; which were founded on certain principles, or rather the absence of all principle—her evil passions and the ambitious views she entertained for the future establishment of the fair and innocent Alice.

Old Simon and Hester were much surprised on seeing Lady Boothroyd in their humble cottage. They refused her offers to take charge of Lillian, and would not even accept of a few presents for the child.

The likeness of Lillian to the portrait of Allan was most striking, and she mentally resolved it should be removed or destroyed, blaming herself that it had not been done before.

Instead of appearing bashful and overawed at the sight of a strange lady richly dressed, the child walked fearlessly up to her, looked earnestly in her face, and uttered a few words in Hindostani; then, seeing she was not understood, turned sadly away.

"This is Lady Boothroyd," exclaimed Hester, secretly vexed; "a very great and rich lady, who never saw your mother. Pray excuse her, your ladyship; she is so young."

At the name of Boothroyd, Lillian looked as if she were trying to recollect something. Just as she was about to speak again, the visitor rose to depart.

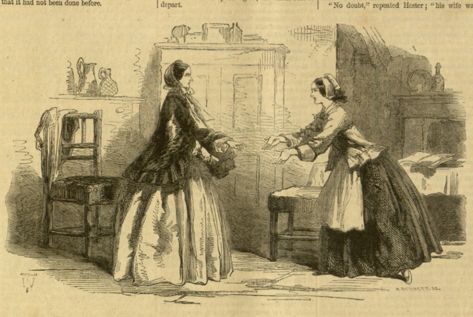
"On my return from London," she said, "I trust to hit on some means by which to benefit your niece without wounding your feelings. Feelings," she added, with a sigh, "which I can too well understand. I need not bid you be kind to your niece, for I perceive that she has already wound herself around your hearts."

Then kissing the intended victim of her treachery, the evil-minded woman quitted the cottage.

"That's a good lady, if ever there was one!" exclaimed Simon Gee, as he watched her departure from the window. "She is going to Mark Rayner's—on some kind errand, I'll warrant."

"No doubt," repeated Hester; "his wife was always a great favorite with her ladyship. Mark, by all accounts," she added, "is not as steady as he should be; and the neighbors do say that he will be obliged to give up the cottage and land to Sir Norman. He is fonder of his gun than the plow."

"Sorry to hear it," said the weaver, resuming his seat at the loom, "for there be worse men in the world than poor Mark, though he be a sort of ne'er-do-well."


A. BOBBETT, SC.

ROSE RAYNER DEMANDING THE PROOF OF HER HUSBAND'S MURDER OF SPRINGTHORP OF LADY BOOTHROYD.

"I have called to see you, Rose, before quitting the Hall," said Lady Boothroyd, as she entered the cottage; "for you are aware that I take an interest in your welfare. Sit down; you seem uneasy. *I guess the cause.*"

"The cause!" faltered the startled wife.

"Yes," answered her ladyship. "I heard the steward tell Sir Norman that your husband had not paid his last half year's rent, and now another term is all but due. Silex is no friend of Mark; but do not make yourself uneasy. I came to——"

"O! thank you, my lady—a thousand times!" interrupted Rose, with the air of a person suddenly relieved from an oppressive fear. "The money will be paid in time."

"From your portion?" observed the artful woman: "I thought that had been squandered long since."

"From my husband's labor," replied the former, proudly. "He now works as hard as any one in the place; is in his fields early and late."

"*Since when?*"

"Since—O, for a long time now, my lady," answered Rose, confusedly.

"I am happy to hear it," said the mistress of Meldown Park; "for I had heard a far different tale, and a sad one. They told me, not only that the money left by your grandfather was spent, but that you had parted with many things you never ought to have parted with, amongst others, *the Bible I presented you with when you quitted the school.*"

"They told you falsely—very falsely, then!" exclaimed the unsuspecting woman, eagerly. "Who could have been so cruel? Believe me, I have done nothing of the kind."

An incredulous smile appeared on the features of her visitor.

"I can convince you, my lady," added the speaker, joyfully, at the same time going to an old-fashioned chest of drawers, and producing the sacred volume. "Here it is."

She placed it on the table with a triumphant air. Lady Boothroyd opened it at the title-page. As she expected, part of the opposite one, on which she had written her name on the day of presenting it, had been *torn out*. All that remained of the writing was—

"Given to Rose Mayfly, as a reward for good conduct."

The rest was wanting.

"Who could have been so cruel!" exclaimed Rose, deeply mortified when she saw the mutilated leaf.

"Shall I tell you?" replied her ladyship, fixing her keen gray eyes upon the countenance of the unsuspecting wife, to watch the effect of her words: "Your husband."

"Mark! O, my lady, what should he tear it out for?"

"To load his gun with on New Year's eve," answered her ladyship, deliberately, "the night that Springthorp was murdered."

The speaker, who had acted throughout with the skill and tact of an experienced detective, drew from her note-case the blood-stained, half-burnt fragment of paper, and compared it with the mutilated leaf in the Bible. There could not be a doubt that it had formed a part of the same page. The words, "by Lady Boothroyd" completed the inscription. The evidence was perfect.

"I am exceedingly sorry for you," she continued. "Mark is the murderer of the unfortunate keeper, and this is the terrible proof of his guilt."

For several moments the unhappy woman stood, like one stunned by some unexpected blow, confused and only half comprehending her misery; but when its full extent became apparent—when she felt that the life of the man she so devotedly loved was forfeited, a cry of agony escaped her, and, falling on her knees, she grasped the dress of her visitor.

"Spare him, my lady!" she exclaimed, half choking with terror; "spare him, in the name of Him whose mercy the best of us must one day ask. He did not do it designedly—he could not, for cruelty is abhorrent to his nature. Ask whom you will, there is not a neighbor in St. Faith's to speak an ill word against poor Mark: he is my husband—we have been only two years married, and I love him. Oh, yes, with all his faults I love him dearly, for I know his heart. Spare him, and I will bless you night and day, pray for you and yours, be your slave. Oh, trample on me, crush me, kill me, do anything you please, but spare the father of my unborn child!"

These words, the promptings of nature's eloquence, broken by sighs and tears, produced one effect upon the hearer. If they failed to touch her heart, they at least convinced her that, to screen her husband, Rose would consent to any act, however desperate.

"It is a serious thing," she said, "to conceal a murder."

"But this is no murder," sobbed the wretched wife, wringing her hands. "It must have been accident."

"The coroner and jury have pronounced it one," added her ladyship, with cold deliberation, "and if once Sir Norman obtains this proof in his hands——"

"But he will not obtain it," interrupted Rose, renewing her supplications. "Give me that fatal paper. A life, a human life depends upon it. You are a rich and noble lady," she added, "I am poor and very humble. What good will it do you to bring poor Mark to justice? It can't restore the dead, but it will condemn me to shame, to years of misery so sad and hopeless, that death compared with it were mercy."

"I cannot part with this paper," observed her visitor, at the same time replacing it in her note-case, which she returned to her pocket, a precaution not altogether unnecessary, for Rose, in her desperation, looked very much as if she felt inclined to take it from her by force.

"On one condition I may feel disposed to give it up to you, or, rather, to your husband," continued the speaker.

"Condition—name it! That we give up the cottage and fields? Willingly! anything, only speak, my lady, and release my breaking heart."

"Send Mark to the Hall, and he shall learn it," answered the mistress of Meldown Park, at the same time rising to depart. He can easily invent an excuse for requesting to see me. The arrears of rent, my intercession with Sir Norman; anything will do."

Rose saw her intention of quitting the cottage, and instinctively placed herself between the speaker and the door. She had no definite purpose in doing so—terror prompted her.

"Would you dare to offer violence?" said Lady Boothroyd. drawing herself up with dignity.

"Violence!" repeated the half frantic woman. "Such a thought never entered my heart till you suggested it. But I shall go mad, unless you leave me that fatal paper. We will do all you wish; indeed, we will be humble and submissive. Do not drive me to despair!"

"Girl!"

"I am no longer a girl, but a wife," interrupted Rose, strong in a wife's love. "I must have that paper; it is mine, and *I will have it*. Oh, my lady," she added, once more casting herself at her feet, "have some compassion on my tears and agony. Do not tempt me to forget the respect I owe you for your past kindness, the difference of our stations. As you are human, listen to my prayers."

"I hear you," observed her visitor, scornfully.

"I will bind myself in any oath you please, and Mark shall do the same, to perform your bidding. You know that I am truthful. You are a wife yourself; only imagine what I shall endure. Till that dreadful evidence is destroyed, sleep will not visit me, peace be a stranger to my mind, fear follow my footsteps like their shadow; in every sound that approaches my cottage door, I shall imagine I hear the voices of those who come to drag my husband to justice—to the scaffold! O God! I see him there. Mercy! mercy! give him time to repent, for his soul's sake and mine."

Although these touching entreaties produced no effect upon the heart of the cold and haughty woman, the despair of the supplicant began to alarm her for her own personal safety.

"Rose," she said, in a milder tone, "can you not trust to me?"

"Trust you," repeated the excited creature, "with the power of dragging Mark from his home to a prison—of sending him to death? What wife would trust an angel with such a power? Even in her own hands—a secret locked in her heart—it must be a terror to herself," she added. "The paper—I must have that paper!"

"Never!"

Rose sprang towards her, and a protracted struggle ensued; the fingers of Lady Boothroyd became twisted in the luxuriant hair of her assailant, which she tore up by the roots, whilst her nails committed fearful ravages on her neck and face. The woman never once retaliated, although she easily might have done so, for conscience whispered she was acting wrongly. All her endeavors were to obtain the fatal proofs of her husband's crime.

It is difficult to say how the contest might have ended but for the appearance of a third party, Silex, the steward, who, in passing by the cottage, heard the cries of her ladyship for assistance. Although an old, he was still a powerful man—all bone and sinew, with nerves like cordage, and a hand of iron. To release his mistress from the frantic grasp of Rose was the work of an instant.

"Well," he exclaimed, with a grin that displayed his shark-like teeth, "things are improving in St. Faith's! Are you hurt, my lady?"

"Not much," replied his mistress, coolly arranging her disordered dress. "Don't harm her," she added, "she must be mad, for she is not naturally vicious; *I am sorry for her.*"

The unhappy wife, who still lay sobbing in the corner of the cottage, where the strong arm of Silex had dashed her, caught eagerly at the words, and still more at the tone in which they were uttered. Both seemed to imply a hope.

"Forgive me!" she murmured. "Oh, forgive me!"

"Forgive you, hussy!" repeated the steward, shaking her roughly by the arm. "You must have more than the usual effrontery of your sex, to expect or ask such a thing. Forgive you, indeed! A pretty example for the rest of the village. Shall I send for the constables?" he added.

"Do nothing of the kind," replied her ladyship, hastily. "It is my particular desire that you keep strict silence on what has taken place. Rose," she continued, "my intentions in your favor are unchanged; neither your ingratitude nor violence have altered them. Send Mark to the hall the instant he arrives."

"Trample on me—kill me!" exclaimed the still trembling wife, her heart overflowing with gratitude at such unhoped-for mercy. "I am unworthy of pardon."

"I should think so," muttered the old man, spitefully.

"When you can pardon yourself, Rose," observed Lady Boothroyd, with an air of dignified benevolence which none knew better how to assume than herself, "you may ask mine."

With these words she quitted the cottage, accompanied by Mr. Silex, who was not in the slightest degree the dupe of her affected generosity, although he secretly wondered, perhaps, at the motives which could induce her to forego her naturally vindictive feelings.

Both walked through the village in silence—the lady erect and stately, as if returning from some visit of charity and mercy, and the steward obsequiously following her. It was not till they had passed the lodge gates, and found themselves in the park, that he gave utterance to his thoughts.

"Your ladyship is not dealing fairly by me," he said.

"How so?"

"You have secrets which I have no share in."

"Simply because I have not had an opportunity of consulting you," answered the crafty woman.

Her companion shrugged his shoulders doubtfully.

"You may believe me," she added, "for I require your assistance."

"Then I do believe you," exclaimed Mr. Silex, fixing his keen gray eyes upon her.

"I have discovered that Mark Rayner is the murderer of Springthorp," said Lady Boothroyd, "and, like a simpleton, allowed his wife to see the proofs in my possession, instead of at once sending for the man. You witnessed the result. In her desperation she attempted to force them from me."

"Bold, but imprudent," ejaculated her hearer, who had a peculiar habit of keeping up a kind of running commentary on all he heard.

"Now, I want to employ Mark."

"In what way?"

"*Confidentially.*"

"Of course."

"I have seen the child."

"Allan Boothroyd's child," said the old man, with a chuckle; "and you want Mark Rayner to remove her, steal her. It will be the better way," he added, musingly, "for you can rely on him. No instruments work as well as those who do our bidding with the rope round their necks and the scaffold staring them in the face. Besides, he will have to give up his house and land, and quit the country. No one will suspect him. But you said that you required my assistance."

"It is indispensable."

"In what way?"

"You must find me some person in London," answered her ladyship, "who for money will take charge of the girl."

"And treat her kindly?"

Despite her usual hypocrisy, a deep flush suffused the countenance of the artful woman, not so much at the question as the look that accompanied it.

"Most certainly," she answered.

Mr. Silex chuckled, gave one of his peculiar glances, and muttered something about his being a fool for making such an unnecessary inquiry.

"At one time I could have done what you require without much difficulty," he observed; "but it is many years since I was in London, and, to deal candidly with you, I scarcely care to visit it again."

"Remember," urged the mistress of Meldown Park, "that if the child be really the daughter of Allan, and the secret of her birth should be discovered, your safety may be compromised."

"I shall be dead long before that event takes place," observed the steward, philosophically. "However, pay me well and I will go."

"We will not quarrel on the score of money," said his mistress; "but remember, I must be prepared with the address of the person. I require it at once."

"You shall be."

"And when will you start?"

"The instant your ladyship furnishes me with the means—in an hour, if necessary; my preparations are easily made; but I must have the money; in transactions such as ours I give no credit."

"Money!" repeated his confederate,—"always money."

"Do you imagine I save for the pleasure of saving?" demanded the old man, tartly.

"Sometimes I think you do," answered Lady Boothroyd. "You are one of the few persons whom I never yet could thoroughly comprehend. You are aged—childless, and yet continue to heap up wealth without use for it, or pleasure."

"Without pleasure!" exclaimed the steward, with a sarcastic smile. "Name me the pleasure I do not possess: a stately mansion, a fine domain, horses, equipage, a luxurious table, luscious wines, the world's respect, or that which is akin to it—its cringing homage—I grasp them all! concentrated in one essence—*money*—carry them in my pocket. Mine are enjoyments that neither diminish my fortune nor affect my health. My excesses leave no vapid aching of the brain; on the contrary, it never feels so light and elastic as after a debauch. The fools of the world might envy me! The motive is the same in both of us; we each prize wealth as a means to a certain end."

"But I forget myself," he added, starting like one awaking from a reverie. "It is not often that I relate my dreams."

"Follow me to the house," said her ladyship, struck by his manner, and still more by the singularity of his words, "and I will arrange for your departure at once."

"In an hour I will be there," replied the old man. "I will but leave certain directions at the home farm."

So saying he walked away.

"A very odd person," thought Lady Boothroyd, as she gazed after him. "He has been useful in his time, but I shall feel more satisfied when he is dead."

It was not the first time that a similar reflection had struck her.

CHAPTER XII.

When Mark Rayner returned to his cottage at the usual noontide hour, he was both surprised and alarmed at the state in which he found his devoted, faithful wife, who threw her arms about his neck the instant she beheld him, and wept upon his shoulder like a suffering child.

Too well did the unhappy man divine the cause of her sorrow; for since the fatal night of the keeper's death he had never known a moment's peace. Not that he felt assured his was the hand which fired the deadly shot, for several guns had been discharged on the occasion; but the dread that it was so, the uncertainty haunted him. Hence the remorse, the sudden resolution to labor, the unwearying toil by day, the restless nights, broken by dreams, that made sweet sleep a terror.

"I never harmed poor Springthorp willingly!" he exclaimed, when Rose had related to him the visit of Lady Boothroyd, and the discovery she had made, "and yet peace is a stranger to my heart. Why did I not listen to your entreaties," he added, with a burst of passionate regret, "and remain at home that fatal night? But Sanders was here; you recollect how he jeered me about not having a will of my own, threw petticoat government in my teeth, and—in short, I yielded, and lost happiness for life rather than encounter a sneer."

Mark's case was not an isolated one; men are frequently more easily laughed than reasoned out of what is right, and yet they designate themselves the *stronger sex*.

"How you must despise and hate me," he murmured, without venturing to raise his eyes to those of the woman whose peace of mind he had so cruelly trifled with, whose heart he had disappointed.

The kiss which her pale lips imprinted on his brow was not only the seal of her forgiveness, but the pledge that the love he had won was unchanged. Had his crime been less, it is possible that the resentment of his wife might have been greater, but in presence of danger, threatening the very life of the man on whom she had bestowed her affections, his errors were forgotten.

What a wondrous thing is woman's love! The line that fathoms oceans cannot measure its depths, or the imagination, which rises to the stars, paint the strength and purity of its devotion. It is the one link left, the golden thread uniting earth with heaven.

"When I think what a villain I have been to you," said Mark, "I detest myself. That I should drag you down to shame—you whom I felt so proud of; you whom all the village loved and respected. Rose, Rose, the neighbors were quite right when they said I was unworthy of you."

There was one part of her narrative which the unhappy man could not comprehend; the leaf torn from the Bible, and used as wadding for his gun; he had not the slightest recollection of having used it.

"It would do me no good to deny it either to you or on my trial," he observed; "but knowing how highly you prized the book, I am not so heartless as to have defaced it. You must be in error."

Rose went to the drawers to produce the sacred volume in order to convince him.

It was gone!

Lady Boothroyd had taken it, and the evidence was complete.

---

* This name was erroneously printed "Walter" in a preceding chapter.

No sooner did the anxious wife perceive her loss, than the hope, which had hitherto sustained her, vanished; she lost all confidence in her visitor's promise of mercy.

"I must see her," exclaimed her husband, thoughtfully. "It is my only chance, for flight without money is impossible."

It was in vain that the anxious wife attempted to combat with his resolution. He listened to her kindly and gratefully, but remained firm in it; and he was right.

Rose, in her simplicity and ignorance of the world, fondly imagined that any quiet nook in a distant part of the country might conceal them. He knew that the ministers of justice once set upon his track, Europe could not hide him.

Having come to this decision, Mark laid aside his working clothes, and dressed himself for his visit to the Hall.

If his adieus to his wife under such circumstances were painful to her feelings, our readers can imagine what the agony of her suspense must have been till his return.

As the poor fellow—for, despite his past misconduct, there were many good and redeeming qualities in his nature—quitted his house by the front door, with the desperate determination of a man who has set his all upon one stake, his companion and fellow poacher, Sanders, crept stealthily away from the back of the house, where he had been listening to the conversation. He, too, had been out on New Year's eve, and fired on the keepers like the rest of the party; and conscience, possibly, had alarmed him, for, on seeing Lady Boothroyd and the steward leave the cottage of Rose, he had concealed himself till the return of her husband, in order to overhear what had passed.

"It be all right," he muttered to himself, as he withdrew. "I be safe enough, seeing her ladyship *has got the proof* that it wor Mark. She won't hurt un," he added; "his wife be too great a favorite for that."

In his joy at having the weight removed from his *mind*—not his heart, for it was fear, not remorse, that had haunted him—the speaker adjourned to the public-house, instead of returning to his labor.

Although Mark Rayner was only absent three hours, they appeared so many ages to the trembling, anxious wife, who, with her pale face glued, as it were, to the window which commanded the road leading from the Park, awaited his return.

A cry of joy broke from her lips at last. Mark was returning. She could not be mistaken; although the distance, and the tears which dimmed her sight rendered his features indistinct, she recognized his form, his air, his walk. Affection seldom errs.

"His step is quick," she murmured. "Is it good or ill news that he brings with him? Oh, this suspense is painful! It must be good," she continued, after a pause, "for sorrow's pace is laggard. He sees me; he waves his hand to me. Then there is hope. The kind, good lady has not deceived me. Bless her! bless her!"

When Mark entered the cottage, his wife's agitation was so great that she could not speak; but her eyes were more eloquent than words.

"Saved!" he whispered, as he folded her in his arms. "Saved!"

Never did a more grateful prayer rise from the suffering heart than the silent one which Rose offered to Heaven for her benefactress, as she deemed her.

"You saw her ladyship?" she exclaimed, at last.

"Yes."

"And she has given you back the terrible proof?"

"Not yet."

"But she will do so?"

"When the conditions are fulfilled."

"Conditions?" repeated Rose; "true, true, I had forgotten them. What is it she exacts? That we give up our home, and quit the place? Willingly, for here sad thoughts and vain regrets would ever haunt us."

"Wife," said Mark Rayner, taking her by the hand, "I promised to fulfill them, but it depends on you whether I do so or not. Had I refused, I should have left the Hall a prisoner. Her *benevolent* ladyship," he continued, with a bitter accent on the word benevolent, "exacts that we leave St. Faith's, and fly to a foreign land."

"To the end of the earth!" exclaimed the grateful woman; "for there is safety."

"It is not the only condition," added her husband, slowly.

His wife regarded him uneasily.

"I must act the part of a thief, to escape the doom of a murderer."

"A thief!"

"And steal Lillian, the child of my old companion, Barny Gee."

"Steal Lillian!"

"Such are the terms on which I may be permitted to hide my shame and repentance in another land. It will break old Simon's heart."

"But why commit such a heartless, useless crime?" demanded Rose. "I cannot understand it. I see no motive."

"Lady Boothroyd declares that it will be impossible to forget the events of New Year's eve, as long as the child remains at St. Faith's, that her presence will be a continual source of irritation, and keep up the ill feeling between Sir Norman and his tenants."

"And you consented?"

"I did," replied Mark, coloring with shame, for the love of life was strong. "I thought of you, Rose—of the unborn babe that soon will call me father."

"It could only have been to try you, Mark," exclaimed his wife, to whose clear and upright mind the crime seemed dark and villainous, as the reasons for perpetrating it were trivial and insufficient. Had she lived more in the world, society would have taught her one great truth—that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the pretext marks the motive.

"You do not know her," observed her husband, bitterly. "Her heart is as completely a stranger to every sentiment of humanity as yours is to crime. I pointed out to her how poor old Simon and Hester loved the child; the misery its loss would inflict upon them; the doubt, the agony of years it must entail. I might as well have preached to stone."

"Did Lady Boothroyd make you no reply?" demanded Rose, still more and more surprised.

"Yes, one. The gallows or obedience."

The fearful shudder which ran through the frame of his hearer denoted the violence of the contest between love and her strict sense of right.

"Poor Lillian!" she murmured. "It is dreadful; but there is no other alternative. If love can atone the crime, I will atone it," she added, "by proving a mother to her."

"She is not to remain with us," said Mark, avoiding the gaze of his wife. "I am to deliver the child to her ladyship in London. She has promised to educate and provide for her."

Reckless and dissipated as the speaker had been, no pecuniary consideration could have induced him to commit the act demanded of him, or his wife to sanction it; but terror did. Both were young, and in nature's course had years of love and happiness before them. If Rose fell, it was not without a struggle.

Pause, gentle reader, ere you condemn her—remember the inducement was her husband's safety: angels have fallen before.

It had so long been known in the village that the Rayners were behind-hand with their rent, but little surprise was expressed when, at an early hour the following day, the bailiff took possession of their cottage and land. More than one friend stepped forward with offers of assistance. They were declined—Mark and his wife had determined to emigrate; and, in answer to numerous questions respecting Sir Norman, stated that he had acted liberally to them.

We need scarcely add that the seizure had been agreed between Lady Boothroyd and the unwilling instruments of her evil design.

Nearly all the inhabitants of St. Faith's came to bid them good-bye; some marveled at the suddenness of their departure, others regretted it; all offered advice, a few consolation.

"Somehow, I don't think I shall be long after thee, Mark," observed Sanders, "for I have taken a dislike to the place—it will be mortal lonesome when thee art gone."

The severest trial was the parting with the weaver and his wife, who forced upon them numberless little tokens of kind feelings and good wishes, which husband and wife would fain have declined.

"Take 'em," said the old man, "don't 'ee be proud; they will remind thee of home and friends. Keep up thee courage in a foreign land till thee has earned the means to come back to us. To be sure, I shall be dead before that day. But Lillian here," he added, holding up the child for them to kiss, "will, please God, be alive to welcome you."

Rose could only reply by her tears.

Many of the villagers accompanied them for several miles on the road, and only took leave of the wanderers when the coach, which was to convey them to Exeter, drove up. Little did they imagine how soon Mark was to revisit his native place, or the errand that would bring him back. Had they even guessed at such a thing, their adieus and kind wishes had been changed to curses.

It was past midnight when Mark Rayner, who felt the full enormity of the act circumstances urged him to commit, approached St. Faith's. He had disguised himself so effectually, that had he met any of his late boon companions in idleness, recognition would have been impossible. And yet he trembled at every sound. The moaning of the wind through the leafless branches of the trees, the slightest rustling in the hedge, filled his soul with terror. There was something even in the crispness of the snow, as it yielded to his heavy tread, that added to his uneasiness.

He was but young in crime.

Arrived at the brow of the hill where the narrow footpath leads through the churchyard to the village, he paused, with his hand upon the turnstile which he had leaped over a hundred times when a boy, like one unable to proceed.

"Not that road," he muttered. "I dare not take it now. Bad as I am, I can't pass poor Barny's grave on my way to steal his child."

There were other graves there. The simple turf-bound resting-places of those who had loved him in his youth; the mother who had borne him, the father who had left a spotless name, which he was about to dishonor.

No wonder that Mark Rayner could not pass through the churchyard of St. Faith's but took the common route.

Never had the unhappy man felt so wretched as when creeping stealthily into his native village, gliding like a shadow under the walls of each well-remembered dwelling, whose inmates had so lately bade God speed him on his way.

More than once he felt tempted to renounce his project and fly; but the thought of Rose restrained him.

"I might suffer alone," he argued with himself; "but I have no right to bring disgrace and misery upon her."

He should have thought of that before.

On reaching the cottage of Simon Gee, Mark—to whom every step of the ground was familiar—turned down the narrow lane which separated the old man's garden from farmer Minter's orchard; and, leaping over the hedge, crept cautiously to the back of the house.

It required no great skill to take out a pane of glass, open the old-fashioned casement, and enter the room where Lillian was sleeping. Once there, a terrible thought flashed suddenly upon his mind: Should the child awake, and alarm the aged couple by her cries?

With the speed of terror he wrapped the unconscious infant in the coverlid of the bed, and sprang with her through the window. This haste produced the very thing he felt most anxious to avoid: the shock of the descent startled the orphan from her slumber, and she uttered loud piercing cries. The voices of Simon and his wife were heard, and the noise of their striking a light.

The alarm once given, Mark felt assured that he should be pursued. But even that danger had been foreseen and provided against by the calculating fiend who had urged him on to crime; Lady Boothroyd had given him the keys of a private entrance to the park, and of an old pavilion, situated in a remote part of the grounds, which had not been used for years, in fact it had been closed so long that the ivy had grown over the worm-eaten shutters, and half buried the portico and roof in its rank embrace.

The guilty fugitive scarcely drew breath till he found himself safe within the shelter of its walls.

Great was the consternation of the weaver and Hester when they rushed, half dressed into the little chamber of Lillian and discovered their loss; the open window betrayed the means by which the cottage had been entered and their niece carried off.

The old man clasped his hands in despair, as he regarded the vacant bed.

"It is still warm!" exclaimed his wife. "The robber cannot be far off—besides we heard her cries. Rouse yourself," she added, shaking her husband by the arm; "run to farmer Minter's! call up the neighbors! he may be overtaken yet!"

It was no time to ask why the child had been stolen from them, or speculate upon the motives which led to the crime. Simon Gee ran, as he was directed, to the house of the farmer; whilst the distracted Hester alarmed the rest of the neighbors. In a few minutes the village was astir. The news of their loss excited the utmost surprise and indignation: such a thing had never before been heard of in St. Faith's, and long ere dawn a dozen horsemen, at least, were scouring the country in every direction, so great was the sympathy felt for the orphan of poor Barny and his sorrowful relatives.

It is almost needless to say that farmer Minter was one of the most active in the pursuit, or that it was fruitless. The plan had been so artfully laid, that even his intelligence was at fault. And on the return of the villagers, as a last resource, he resolved to consult Mr. Thornton.

Poor old Simon accompanied him to The Elms.

The worthy magistrate listened to their statement with astonishment. He could perceive no motive for the outrage. And his visitors had to repeat them more than once, before he could bring himself to believe its truthfulness.

"I will seek my murdered brother's child," exclaimed the heart-broken weaver, "if I beg my way, and tramp the country through."

"I scarcely know what to advise," observed the gentleman; "the features of the crime are so unusual. All that I can do, I will do. A description of the child shall be sent to the police, both in the rural districts and the neighboring towns. A reward must be offered."

"Let it be a handsome one," said the farmer; "I will guarantee that it shall be forthcoming. There is not a man in St. Faith's but will contribute, for Lillian, in some sort, belongs to us all.

"I will see to that," answered the magistrate. "Have any gipsies been lurking in the neighborhood lately?"

Neither of his visitors had either seen or heard of any.

"It bean't the gipsies' work!" exclaimed the honest farmer. "They have nought to do wi' it."

"Have you any suspicion?" demanded Mr. Thornton.

"Yes," replied the farmer resolutely.

"It is your duty, then, to speak out."

"Well then," answered Mr. Minter, deliberately, "it be my belief that Sir Norman Boothroyd has a hand in it."

The gentleman reflected for several instants before making a reply, and weighed the circumstances well over in his mind. No wonder that in the absence of all ostensible motive or reason, he exonerated the baronet from all participation in such an act; for though he knew him to be both proud and vindictive, he was also aware that prudence was, to say the least of it, quite as strong in him as courage, and the act was a decided felony.

"Improbable," he said, "nay, almost impossible. Sir Norman, to my positive knowledge, has not quitted his room for several days. He has been ill, exceedingly ill. Besides, why should he descend to a crime that would not only disgrace him in the eyes of the world, but render him amenable to the laws of his country?"

The accuser shook his head—he was silent, but not convinced.

"I can't think it be the baronet," said Simon Gee, "for it wor only two days sin' her ladyship called at our poor cottage, kissed the child, and offered to assist us in providing for it, though Hester and I both declined her help."

"Lady Boothroyd is too estimable a person," observed Mr. Thornton, "to lend her countenance to any such unworthy act."

"That she be," exclaimed both the visitors; "things would be different at the Hall—poor lady—if she had her will."

The magistrate, with all his shrewdness, was of the same opinion—a proof that the little conjugal drama acted at Meldown Park had been well acted, since it had deceived even his penetration.

CHAPTER XIII.

There were two persons—at present rather unimportant ones in the progress of our tale, but whom we trust our readers will take a deeper interest in as it proceeds—who looked upon the approaching departure of Sir Norman Boothroyd and his family from Meldown Park with regret, Alice and her play-fellow, the son of Mr. Thornton.

It is true they had frequently been separated before, but then it was only for a time. The Eton holidays were sure to bring William back again to "The Elms," when, if immeasurable pride on one side, and a sturdy, manly independence on the other, suspended, as it frequently did, the intercourse between the two families, the children, who neither felt nor understood the estrangement, generally contrived to see each other.

If the heiress went out walking with her French governess or waiting-maid, William, mounted on his pony, was certain either to overtake or meet them—by accident, of course. Both were so young and innocent, that neither mademoiselle nor Jane suspected for an instant that any stronger feeling than mere childish friendship could possibly exist between them. Alice held up her rosy lips so frankly to be kissed, whilst the conversation of the youth ran on his school adventures—cricket, rowing matches on the Thames; in short, of boyhood's sports and pleasures.

It was astonishing how the intelligent and lovely child retained all those things in her memory. She could repeat the names of every one of the Mermaid's crew—describe her build and colors—knew who pulled the stroke oar in such a race—who steered her.

No wonder they were friends.

Alice felt exceedingly indignant with the masters of Eton, when William upset the project she had formed of persuading papa to send her there, by informing her that girls were not received. She could not understand it. It would have been so much more pleasant than having a governess at home, who was too old to play with her, and a maid continually to walk after her, to say nothing of their being constantly together.

If this strong sympathy did not amount to love, we know not how else to designate it. Not love as the world comprehends the word, with its passions, hopes and tears, but love in germ, slumbering like the seed pearl in its shell, an embryo gem, pure as the young hearts that enshrined it, delicate as the tender bud the genial ray of spring's first sun has warmed into existence, and time may expand into a beauteous flower, provided no rude step crushes its unclosed leaves.

The day before the intended departure from the hall had arrived, cards, with the usual "P. P. C.," were either left or sent to the houses of most of the neighboring gentry, including Mr. Thornton's, for Lady Boothroyd was far too polite, at such a moment, to leave at variance with any one.

Poor William felt exceedingly unhappy. He had not been able to catch a glimpse of his little play-fellow. He had cantered his pony down every lane, and along her customary walks, without meeting her. Most lads of his age would have given up the attempt in despair, but he was an Etonian, and Eton boys seldom despair of anything.

"It can't be accident," he argued with himself. "Alice has been ordered not to walk beyond the park."

And he was right in the conclusion, which was not the only one he came to; for, as the little maiden could not come to him, he resolved to go to her.

Leaving his pony in the village, he passed down the lane, between old Simon's cottage and Minter's farm, the very road Mark had taken the preceding night, after the abduction of Lillian. To a youth of his activity, the wall afforded but a slight impediment. By the aid of a tree he soon swung himself to the summit, and dropped into the park.

As he hastened along the narrow, winding path, which led through the preserves, something glittering on the snow attracted his attention, and he naturally stooped to raise it. It proved to be a chain of gold, fine as a thread, with a heart formed of a single turquoise, engraved with what appeared to him strange-looking characters pendant from it.

We need scarcely remind our readers that such style of trinkets are exceedingly common in the east.

"Alice has been here," he said; "it must belong to her, and yet I never saw her wear it."

With this conclusion he put it in his pocket.

As he anticipated, the object of his search was in the park, attended only by her maid, Jane, taking her morning walk. No sooner did the child recognize him than she ran towards him, and held up her innocent face to be kissed.

"Oh, fie, Miss Alice," exclaimed the maid. "You forget what my lady said to you."

"And so I did," answered her charge, blushing at the recollection of her disobedience.

At that moment Robert, one of the under keepers, made his appearance; and, as it so happened, Jane had a few parting words to say to him; for, as a matter of course, he was not to remove from Meldown Park with the rest of the establishment to London. And, as the poet says, there had been certain love passages between them.

Cautioning the children not to wander far away, the girl hastened to meet her lover, leaving them to themselves.

"And what was it your mother said to you, Alice?" inquired William.

"That I was not to kiss either you or your papa again."

"And why not?"

"I am sure I can't tell," answered the child, innocently; "she allows Squire Blundell, with his great rough beard, to kiss me."

"Ah! but she never recollected I should have to bid you good-bye," observed the boy.

"Perhaps not."

And with this reflection the little culprit felt quite satisfied. Of course her mamma could not have thought of that.

It is not our intention to abuse the time and patience of our readers by relating word for word the conversation of two such children; and yet, perchance, a lesson might be learnt from it. How bitterly William regretted the departure of Alice from Meldown, or how Alice consoled him by telling him that she was to pay a visit to her aunt, the Countess of Cardigan at The Holm.

"Why, The Holm is only three or four miles from Eton," said her companion, joyously, "and Illston is on the same form with me."

Viscount Illston was her cousin, the only son and heir of the earl.

"I must make friends with him," he added. "I'll write his exercises, and fight for him."

Alice thought that would do *nicely*—little imagining what the battles of an Eton boy are like.

Time flies as rapidly with the young, as wealth does with the thoughtless heir; both deem their treasure inexhaustible; and a considerable portion of the morning had passed before either of the speakers thought of separating. William was the first to recollect the necessity of doing so, for he had promised his father to be back by a certain hour, and he bade his companion good-bye. Alice, however, would not permit of his leaving her in the plantation, but insisted on seeing him as far as the park wall, and safely over it.

He was nearly half way home before he recollected the chain. His first impulse was to ride back and restore it to her, for he had not the slightest doubt of its being hers. Then he thought again that Alice had doubtless returned to the hall, and continued his road to The Elms.

"It was very stupid of me," he muttered; "but there is no help for it now. I must keep it till we meet again."

It is not to be supposed that the grief of Alice at parting from her companion was either deep or very lasting, especially with the prospect of so soon seeing him again:—

> "The tear down childhood's cheek that flows
> Is like the dew-drop on the rose;
> With the first breeze that passes by
> And waves the bush, the flower is dry."

All her thoughts now were to return as quickly as possible to the spot where she had left the waiting-maid; but, unfortunately, the part of the grounds in which she had wandered with William was least familiar to her. She took the wrong turning, and only discovered her error when she found herself in front of the old pavilion half buried in ivy. Never having seen the building before, the curiosity of the child naturally became excited.

"What a strange-looking place!" she exclaimed, pausing to contemplate it. "I wonder if any one lives there."

Walking cautiously round it, Alice came to the portico, and noticed footprints in the snow upon the steps.

"I dare say it belongs to Fletcher, or some of the keepers," she thought. "They will show me my way to the house."

To run up the steps and try the door was the act of an instant. It was fastened.

"No one there," she said, speaking aloud. "I must try to find my way again."

Just as she was about to descend, a plaintive moan fell upon her ear, and caused her to start with terror. She would have fled had not a voice as childlike as her own arrested her flight. She listened. It evidently came from the interior of the building.

Placing her eye to the keyhole, Alice saw, to her astonishment, a girl about her own age, wrapped up in the patchwork coverlid of a bed, crying and moaning bitterly.

"Who are you?" she demanded.

The answer was made in a language which she could not understand, and the question was repeated.

"   ," cried the person, whom we need not inform our readers was no other than Lillian.

Alice repeated the words, to impress them on her memory.

"And what are you crying for?" she added.

"   ," was the reply.

There was something so desolate in the appearance of the little sufferer, that the heart of the heiress was touched, and several times she essayed to force open the door; but, old as it was, it resisted her feeble strength.

"I will soon be back," she exclaimed, quite out of breath with her exertions. "Don't cry so. Don't cry!"

Darting down the steps of the portico, Alice took the first path that presented itself, not doubting but it would either lead her to the Hall, or to one of the lodges, where assistance might be readily procured.

She had not proceeded far when, to her great joy, she recognized her mother in conversation with a man, who, seeing her approach, hastily disappeared in the plantation. It was Mark Rayner.

"You here!" said Lady Boothroyd, surprised and vexed at the encounter.

"Oh! mamma, mamma!" replied her daughter, "there is a poor, little child, not older than myself, shut up in such a strange-looking place, and crying as if her heart would break. Do come and let her out."

"A child!" repeated the artful woman, dreadfully annoyed.

"Yes, and so pretty."

"Have you seen her?"

"Yes, mamma."

"And has Jane *seen her too?*"

"No, mamma," answered Alice; "I left Jane talking with one of the keepers, and found out the place alone; it is so cold and sad there; pray, come," she added, taking hold of her dress, as if to draw her towards the spot; "I am sure you will pity her."

Lady Boothroyd was not a person easily thrown off her balance; but the discovery of her victim made by her own child disconcerted her; she knew how tenacious her memory was, and that such a circumstance would remain indellibly impressed upon it.

"She is a wicked gipsy girl, who has been sent there to punish her."

Alice looked in her face. Her mother read the natural, the involuntary doubt in her eyes, and blushed at her own unworthiness.

Truth is the shadow of God, the emblem and visible sign of His presence upon earth; and it is an awful thing when parents who, next to God, should command the respect and veneration of their offspring, descend to falsehood with them; the lie may pass unnoticed for a time—years even may elapse—but ultimately the child is sure to detect and meditate upon it, to mourn over it if virtuous and well disposed, or justify its own departure from straightforward, honest sincerity by the example of evil.

"But since you have interceded for her," added her ladyship, "I will give orders for her to be released."

"Oh, thank you, mamma," exclaimed her daughter, joyfully.

"On one condition."

"Anything! I will be so good mademoiselle shall not have to complain of my lessons and exercises for a week to come."

Her mother gave her to understand that the condition consisted in keeping absolute silence to any one on the discovery she had made of the wicked little gipsy girl, as she called her, in the old pavilion. Alice promised, delighted at having obtained the pardon of the supposed culprit on such easy terms.

On their way through the park they encountered Jane, who, alarmed for the safety of her young charge, had been seeking her on every part of the grounds except the right one.

"Is this the way you attend to your young mistress?" demanded Lady Boothroyd, angrily.

The girl attempted to offer an excuse, but was interrupted by being sharply ordered to return at once to the Hall.

Sir Norman was chatting with the Reverend Dr. and Mrs. Poundtext, who had called to pay them a visit of adieu previous to the departure of the family, when his wife and daughter entered the drawing-room. Although her ladyship felt anything but in an amiable humor, she at once sank into her usually passive role of echoing her husband's sentiments and words; it was hardly worth the while, she thought, to drop the mask for the few remaining hours of her stay at Meldown; the character might be somewhat irksome, but the farce was nearly over.

"Where have you been?" inquired her husband, in a tone of peevishness, which, had they been alone, he would not have ventured to indulge in. "Knowing the fearful, diabolical, unnatural, unheard-of outrage that has been attempted, you ought to be more careful of my feelings. I have been uneasy at your absence."

Her ladyship listened to the reproach with exquisitely acted meekness and conjugal submission.

The clergyman looked, or attempted to look, more and more horrified at each succeeding adjective, and at the end of the string gave vent to his feelings in a deep-drawn sigh, wrung from him, no doubt, by his profound conviction of the depravity of human nature.

"Oh, Doctor," here exclaimed little Alice, suddenly recollecting the strange words she had heard in the pavilion, "what is the meaning of ———?"

The rector made her repeat them.

"Why, bless me!" he exclaimed, with evident surprise, "they are Hindostani! Where could she have picked them up?"

"Mademoiselle Faulain is always permitting her to read some absurd novel, instead of attending to her proper studies," answered her ladyship, hastily, for she felt sincerely alarmed.

Lady Boothroyd rang the bell, and Alice, at a loss to understand how she had offended, was sent, as a punishment, to her own room.

The visitors soon afterwards took their leave, and the circumstance was forgotten.

For nearly four-and-twenty hours Mark and Lillian had remained close prisoners in the pavilion in the park. Both suffered severely from cold and hunger, but the child the least; for the guilty, though not hardened man, had fortunately discovered a biscuit in his pocket which Rose had placed there before parting from him, and he gave it untasted to the orphan, to whom he contrived to impart partial warmth by holding her in his arms, closely wrapped up in the coverlid of the bed which he had taken with her when he stole her.

During the long and tedious hours of his concealment he had ample time to reflect on his past folly—the happiness he had thrown away—the duties neglected; and remorse and suffering wrought a wholesome lesson.

"That I should be skulking like a miserable thief," he murmured, "almost within sight of my native place. *Like?* I am a thief," he added, "and the worst of thieves, for I have robbed poor Simon of his only consolation. How little does the kind old man imagine whom he has to thank for making his home desolate!"

At times he cursed bitterly the unprincipled woman who had compelled him to act so degraded a part.

The thought of Rose, and the cruel anxiety she must be enduring, haunted him.

About midnight he was visited by Lady Boothroyd, who brought with her food and wine, as well as some of Alice's cast-off clothes for Lillian.

It was a bitter night for a woman delicately nurtured and luxurious by habit to steal from her home and walk more than a mile through the snow. But, like many others in the world, her evil passions sustained her where the natural sentiments of duty or affection too often fail.

"Close the door," she said.

Mark Rayner mechanically obeyed her.

A light was struck, for the lady had not forgotten that her prisoners were in darkness. Lillian opened her eyes at the sudden flash, and gazed upon her enemy in silent wonder.

"I have brought you food," continued the speaker, "to refresh yourself whilst I dress the child; we have not an instant to lose."

The instrument of her crime was too hungry as well as too fearful not to do as she directed.

In dressing Lillian her ladyship noticed, with anger, that a slender chain of gold, which, on her visit to the cottage of the weaver she had noticed round the neck of her victim, was gone, and she imperatively demanded it. It was in vain that Mark declared he had neither seen nor taken it; his assertions were listened to with scorn and disbelief.

“I tell you that I have it not, my lady,” he repeated. “Why should I lie to you? It can't be for the value; and even if I had taken it,” he added, doggedly, for his temper began to be roused, “I have as much right to the trinket as yourself. You are no relative of poor Lillian!”

The last observation silenced, although it failed to convince her, and the present was neither the time nor place for disputes, especially as her polite ladyship possessed a certain means, as she imagined, of extorting it from him.

“Follow me,” said she, as soon as the child was dressed, and she considered that they had had sufficient time to refresh themselves.

“Where to, my lady?”

“The stables.”

“Bargo, the groom, sleeps there,” observed Mark, hesitatingly.

“I have sent him to Exeter, purposely, that he may be out of the way, replied the mistress of Meldown Hall; for you must take Sir Norman's hunter, Milton, ride him as far as Exeter, and then turn him loose; if lost it cannot be helped.”

“But why all these precautions?” inquired the man.

“The fools of St. Faith's have been scouring the country in every direction,” said her ladyship. “And I need not remind you how excessively disagreeable it would be to both of us should you be taken,—not that there is much fear,” she added. “Milton is the fastest horse in the shire, *and you ride for your life.*”

The last words were pronounced with an emphasis that made her hearer shudder.

“I leave for London,” continued the speaker, “in the morning. You already know where to meet me with your charge. Be faithful, and you shall find me grateful.”

On reaching the stable, Mark hastily saddled the horse; and mounting, with Lillian before him, only waited for his last orders to start.

“You have sufficient money for your journey?”

“More than sufficient,” answered the husband of Rose, bitterly.

“Away, then; the same key that gave you admittance to the park will give you egress by the private gate on the common. Take the path through the home preserves. The keepers are all watching in the north wood; and remember the penalty if you are taken.”

Mark put spurs to the spirited animal, and speedily disappeared in the direction indicated. As he rode along he reflected upon the extraordinary conduct of Lady Boothroyd in thus risking her reputation. “What could Lillian possibly be to her?” he asked himself, “or she to Lillian?” and as for the motives alleged he was too shrewd to believe a word of them.

“There is some secret,” he muttered; “but why should I torment myself? Were I to discover it I could do no good, for I am completely in her power, and she is not one to spare those who thwart her. The happiness of Rose, too, is in her hands, and that thought makes me a coward.”

“God help the innocent child!” he added, “whom she has deprived of all natural protection. I would rather a thousand times take it with me to a foreign land than trust it in her keeping. But I am chained like a dog; the halter dangling before my eyes, and must submit.”

With this reflection he pursued his way.

CHAPTER XIV.

How often have we heard the thoughtless boast, “That everything may be had in London for money?” A terrible assertion, and not less terrible than true; painting in a few brief words, more graphically than the long-drawn annual reports of visiting magistrates, gaol chaplains, and numerous societies for the reformation of criminals can do, the depravity which, like a virulent infection, has tainted more or less all classes in this our modern Babylon. We say “all classes,” advisedly: rich and poor are equally included in the reproach; for were there no purchasers, there would be no venders of crime.

The stream of moral corruption, like every other stream, obeys certain generic laws, and can only be stopped effectually at the fountain head: drawing off its branches is a mere palliative, not a cure; and we shall consider the work of reformation commenced in earnest when Englishmen can no longer boast—

That everything may be had in London for money.

Mr. Silex had not forgotten his promise to Lady Boothroyd—to seek out a fit and proper person to take charge of the orphan Lillian—and hence his journey to London. Not that it was by any means necessary, as he pretended, to visit the metropolis for that purpose. He knew of one already; but the worthy agent had a project of his own, which required his personal superintendence in the carrying out.

He never trusted to letters.

The individual selected for this honorable employment was no other than his own twin-brother, Mike, the returned convict, the uncle and tutor of Jack Manders. As a matter of course, the confidential steward of a wealthy Devonshire baronet looked upon himself as far too respectable to acknowledge, but not to employ, him; and, though everything like correspondence or intercourse had long since ceased between them, had never lost sight of the idea that his relative might one day prove useful. He had even carried his recollections of the ties of blood between them so far as to forward him occasionally trifling sums of money, but always by so indirect a channel that every attempt to trace his own whereabouts or position failed.

Mike—or, as he was familiarly called by those who knew him, Old Mike—believed his brother Andrew to be rich; and, instead of feeling grateful for the assistance doled out to him, frequently cursed him for his meanness in not providing more liberally for his wants. There was some show of reason, perhaps, in this resentment: for in early life they had been mixed up in more than one questionable transaction together.

Like many of his class, the returned convict, when he grew old, made up for the absence of personal courage and daring by cunning: he found it quite as profitable to train others to crime and share the fruit of their misdeeds, and far less dangerous.

Jack was not the first victim he had led to vice; nor, in all probability, destined to prove the last.

The old man and his nephew were seated by a comfortable fire, at breakfast, when a smart rap announced a visitor. Mike looked carefully round, to make sure that no tell-tale article had been left about the room; and, having satisfied himself on that point, directed the lad to unbar the door.

Mr. Silex entered the cottage with that peculiar smile which disclosed his shark-like teeth, upon his features. He was no longer dressed in the top boots and cast-off coat of his late master, but in a respectable suit of black, the coat buttoned to the chin, in which attire his long, lank figure resembled an overgrown leech with a human head.

As is the case frequently with twins, there existed a striking resemblance between the two brothers, and Jack was so struck with it, that he stood with his eyes wide open, glancing alternately from one to the other.

The steward looked first at Mike, and then at the door, intimating that he wished to be alone with him.

“Here, Jack,” said his uncle, offering him a shilling, “go and amuse yourself for an hour or two.”

“Plaguy cold out of doors,” muttered the boy, whose curiosity was excited.

A look from his relative warned him that he was not to be trifled with, so he caught up his cap from the breakfast-table, and quitted the house. How he amused himself will appear in another place.

“You have not forgotten me,” observed Mr. Silex, for the first time breaking silence.

“I never forget any one or anything,” muttered the convict, “not even that I have a brother.”

“I should think not,” answered his visitor, sharply, “considering the sums he has sent you; but you were always ungrateful, Mike.”

“Ungrateful!” repeated the former; “and what have I to be grateful for? For a pittance cast as men cast a bone occasionally to a hungry dog—I can't even see the hand that gives it.”

“*You might bite it,*” observed the rich brother, coolly.

“What need of all this hide and seek with me?” demanded the convict, in a tone which showed how deeply he felt irritated. “Why not say at once where you live?”

“I receive no visitors.”

“But I might write to you occasionally.”

“Or letters,” added his relative.

Mike declared, with an oath, that this time, at least, he would be satisfied—he could not endure such unnatural suspicions—they hurt his feelings.

“Which are very sensitive, no doubt,” answered his brother, not in the least degree alarmed at his bluster and vehemence. “I have nothing to reproach myself with. I have done quite as much as my limited circumstances up to the *present time* permitted; and now, when I have taken the trouble of a journey to London, to point out the means of *bettering your condition materially*, I find you, as usual, passionate and ungrateful.”

At the words “bettering your condition,” Mike, who had interrupted him with sundry “poohs” and “pshaws,” suddenly became attentive.

“You know, Andrew,” he said, “that you could always persuade me to anything.”

“But to be reasonable,” continued the steward.

“It's a hard case if a man can't speak his mind to his own brother,” observed the convict; “ain't we twins? But what's your game? Let's hear it.”

“Can you be faithful?”

“You know I can, to my own cost.”

“In the affair I am about to propose to you,” said Mr. Silex, who had his own reasons for avoiding all allusions to the past, “there is little danger.”

“And less money,” exclaimed Mike. “I know your scale of payments of old. But go on, I'll hear all you have to say.”

“On the contrary, there is a considerable sum to be gained.”

“Which I must share with you, I suppose,” muttered the ruffian, “as I did before.”

“Not a penny.”

“Well, *do* speak out,” cried his interesting relative, “I can't bear to feel you twining and creeping like a snake round your purpose. It ain't my way.”

“Impetuous as ever,” ejaculated his brother. “What I have to propose to you is to take charge of a child about seven years old.”

“*Charge!* well, go on.”

“But you must not seek to discover the name of the lady who will bring her to you,” continued the steward, “which, by-the-by, would not be very easy, seeing that she resides in the country, at a great distance from the metropolis.”

“As you do?”

“Exactly.”

“And how much do you propose?” demanded Mike.

“You must make the bargain with her yourself,” answered Mr. Silex. “As a hint for your guidance, I may as well tell you that she can afford to pay liberally. You see I lose no occasion of furthering your interest,” he added.

“And when will she be here?”

“To-morrow.”

The convict leant his head on his hand, and reflected for some time before making up his mind.

“Look you, Andrew,” he said, at last, “if it's only to take charge of a child, and I am to be well paid for it, I don't mind. But I'll run no risks—that is to say, *great risks.* You understand me. I am getting an old man, now, and am living respectably.”

“Indeed!”

“Yes, indeed,” repeated his brother, “as respectably as those who think themselves my betters. For the law can't touch me for what others do.”

“That is to say, you profit by their crimes,” observed the agent of Lady Boothroyd. “I don't blame you. We are each of us philosophers in our way. But you are not more careful of your safety than I am of mine. What the party whom you will treat with may suggest or propose, it is impossible for me to divine. But I tell you that if you harm a hair of the child's head, it will cost you your life, and I never promise idly, as you know. Promise the lady what you like.”

“You feel interested in the kid, then?”

“Greatly.”

“From love?”

The steward opened his jaws, and once more displayed his shark-like teeth, as he indulged in a hearty laugh.

“Aye, I thought not,” said Mike.

“Love!” repeated his visitor, restraining his mirth at last within due bounds; “to be sure I love her; she will one day be worth her weight in gold.”

His hearer did not forget the words; the rest of the compact was soon made, one condition only being added, that when the lady brought the child, Mike was to treat the affair as though he had never heard of it before, and above all, not to let a word escape that could lead her to suspect he had any knowledge, either past or present, of the respectable Mr. Silex.

That settled, the speakers, after a brief discussion of family affairs, parted in a far more amicable spirit than they had met, little imagining, however, that every word of their conversation had been overheard by their nephew, Jack, who had been so unceremoniously dismissed from his breakfast with a shilling to amuse himself with, but who, instead of following the suggestion, crept stealthily round to the back of the cottage, climbed in at the wash-house window, and by this manœuver contrived to satisfy his curiosity.

To his astonishment he learnt that he had an uncle whom he had never seen or heard of before—an uncle who appeared respectable and well-to-do in the world, and the discovery inspired him with the hope of extricating himself from a mode of life he was getting tired of.

Naturally the boy was far from vicious; but reared in ignorance and vice hitherto, he had found no one to counsel or assist him, except in evil. Since the unaccountable disappearance of Richard Hoffman, he had felt sundry qualms and misgivings, lost no inconsiderable portion of his nerve and address, and felt quite chicken-hearted at the sight of a policeman.

“If he would only give me a character,” he thought, “I might get a place; wouldn't I work. I can but ask him.”

Having once come to this conclusion, he decided upon waylaying Mr. Silex on the bridge, and introducing himself to him. Whilst waiting his appearance, he could not avoid reflecting how pleasant it would be to walk about without fear of a hand being suddenly laid upon the collar of his jacket, to be able to look even a policeman in the face; and for the first time in his life he felt in love with honesty.

Although the steward considered his visit to his brother as too unexpected to admit of any arrangement for his being followed, still he was not without his suspicions, and cast his keen little gray eyes peeringly to the right and left, as he emerged from the Belvedere into the Westminster road. About half-way over the bridge he encountered Jack, who, pulling off his cap, confronted him in the center of the pavement.

“Go away, boy,” said the old man, angrily, pretending not to recognize him; “I have nothing for you.”

“Please, uncle, I am not a beggar,” replied the boy.

The wretch started at the word “uncle,” and would have hurried past him, but his nephew was not to be got rid of so easily.

“I want to speak with you, if you will let me,” he added.

“With me?”

“Yes, uncle.”

“I am not your uncle.”

Jack gave him a knowing wink, and muttered a word, far more expressive than elegant, which sounded very like “gammon.”

“It won't do,” he exclaimed, shaking his round, terrier-like head; “I heard all you said to Mike in the crib about the child and the lady.”

Here he gave him another wink, and Mr. Silex began to look exceedingly uncomfortable and bilious.

“Well, well!” said his relative, “I'll hear you—follow me.”

Jack's heart bounded with delight. At last he had found a friend, as he imagined; and he walked after him, cap in hand, till they reached the paved court on the Westminster side of the bridge, when the old man suddenly stopped, and, fixing his eyes upon him, demanded what he had to say.

“I want a character,” replied the boy.

Mr. Silex grinned at the *naivete* of his nephew. There was also something which tickled his fancy in the idea of his applying to him for one.

“And to get work,” added the young pickpocket. “I am tired of running about the streets all night, and ashamed to show my face by day. Everybody seems to know how I gets a livin.' Not a boy in the road will play with me, though I am better dressed, and have twice as much money to spend as they have.”

“And how do you get your living?”

“Oh, you know.”

“How should I possibly know, when I never saw you till this morning?” observed the steward.

“I heard Mike tell you,” answered Jack; who began shrewdly to suspect that his new-found relative cared as little for telling a lie as his old one.

“Why do you wish to leave your uncle, who has been a second father to you?”

“Because I ain't happy in my mind with him, ain't a doin' what is right,” answered the poor boy, coloring deeply. “I shall be sure to be found out one day; and I know what follows, for I've often heard the old un, when he has thought me asleep, talk over Norfolk Island with his old pal, Jem Baxter—him as has the dancing gals. Perhaps you know him.”

The respectable man shook his head.

“Well, you might a done, for he is a good friend of Mike's: They were lagged together; but that ain't nothing to do with it. I want to get out of this line of life; it don't suit me any longer. I can't bear it—afraid to show my face in the streets, and feel my heart thumping against my ribs if I happen to catch the eye of a peeler or a hand only touches my shoulder.”

“What can I do for you?”

“Give me a character. I'll find work.”

Mr. Silex drew himself up with an air of great severity. By his questions and apparent attention, he had detained his nephew till he saw a policeman sufficiently near, if necessary, to arrest him.

“Do you see that officer?” he said.

“Yes, uncle.”

“You are an impertinent young rascal,” continued his relative; “and if you presume to call me by that name again, I'll give you in charge for attempting to pick my pocket. I disown all connection with you. I cast you off. Begone,” he added, pointing to the bridge, “and the way you came.”

Jack stood for an instant the picture of astonishment. Suddenly the tears gushed into his eyes, and he turned indignantly away. His heart was too full for words; but from that hour the heartless wretch who could be deaf to the pleadings of his sister's son, had an enemy far more dangerous than any he had ever yet contended with. An enemy whose strength would increase as his gradually diminished—for youth is the spring-time of the future.

Jack, in common with the lads of his class, had his retreat or den, a very solitary one, whose locality even Uncle Mike was ignorant of. It was a disused sawpit in one of the numerous timber-yards in the Belvedere-road; a stack of timber had been piled over it, and by taking out one of the planks the freeholder, for such he might be considered in the most literal sense of the word, could creep in and evade all risk of detection by drawing the aforesaid plank into its place after him.

The bottom of the pit would have been both cold and damp but for the poor boy's precaution of filling it with straw and shavings, which he had done from time to time, as opportunity offered.

Into this retreat Jack crept, and curled himself up like some wild animal in its lair—not to sleep: his heart was too full for that, but to meditate.

“It's no use,” he thought, “of my trying to do any good for myself; if I tell people I want to be honest they only laugh at me; and I ain't big enough to go for a soldier yet. It'll be Norfolk Island, I suppose, after all.”

A cold shudder came over him as he came to this conclusion, and he turned over in his mind the horrors of the punishment as he had heard Baxter and Mike describe them,—the toil in gangs, chained like beasts of burden; the lash at the slightest breach of discipline; the rope for the commission of crime.

He wept bitterly; for the disappointment, and still more the harsh rebuff he had met with from his respectable relative, had wounded him sensibly; he would have prayed had he known how, but no one had ever taught him his prayers; true, he had seen churches, though he had never ventured to enter one, and had a confused notion of their use.

When we say that Jack would have prayed had he known how, we are far from feeling certain that he did not pray; for who shall say that the simple desire of good in one so ignorant and friendless, who had never experienced either a mother's fondness or a father's care, is not in the eyes of heaven a prayer?

We have no faith in instant conversions: few, in our opinion, become either suddenly good or suddenly wicked; the progress may be swift or slow, according to the soil in which the seeds are sown, but it requires time to ripen and bring forth fruit.

Unfortunately for the boy, he had no friendly monitor at hand to confirm him in his favorable impressions, to advise and console him; gradually he began to feel ashamed of his tears, and look upon them as what Mike would have termed want of pluck. No wonder, therefore, if the feeling of hatred towards Mr. Silex increased rather than decreased as he lay meditating in his retreat.

“The old rascal,” he muttered to himself; “but I'll serve him out; he doesn't know his nephew Jack yet, but he shall know me; he won't let Mike know where he lives—I'll find it out: that's one thing I'll do for him; and I'll find out who his lady is: that's another. He'll give me in charge; will he? perhaps I may do the same thing for him; for though he does wear a fine black coat, and talks so proudly, it's my belief he ain't no better than the rest on us, and his brother as much as told him so.”

Considering the treatment he had received, and the conversation he overheard, the conclusion was not a forced one.

It is a sad truth, but no less a one, that poverty and crime both tend to make children unnaturally precocious, on the same principle, no doubt, that the instinct of self-preservation is developed sooner in animals in their wild state than domestic ones. Jack had but one clue—a very slight one—but he determined to follow it perseveringly; he noticed, whilst talking with his uncle in a little paved court at the end of the bridge, that the soles of his boots were stained with gravel. On quitting his concealment he walked through every street in the neighborhood of the bridge, to discover, if possible, where any had been laid down. For a long time he was unsuccessful. At last he ventured into the park, and found that the parade in front of the Horse Guards was being repaired, and gravel spread in all directions.

Like the Indian hunter following a track, the first footprints of his prey were found.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

TO A DEAD MAIDEN.

Oh! thou pale sleeper, awake from thy trance—
Cheer our sad hearts by thy bright, loving glance;
Too sweet *thy* face to lie under the mound,
Too fair *thy* form to sleep in the cold ground.

Beautiful clay! tho' thou soon must be laid
In the dark grave, 'neath the sad cypress's shade,
One who is merciful, even as just,
Still will watch over thee, guarding thy dust.

RUINED.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

“The man is ruined—hopelessly ruined!”

The words startled me.

“So bad as that?” said the indivual to whom the remark was made.

“Even so bad.”

“Of whom are you speaking?” I ventured to ask.

“Of Jacob Atwood.”

I started to my feet. He was one of my old, intimate, and long-tried friends.

“Ruined, did you say? That man ruined! Impossible!”

“There is no doubt of it. I received my information from those who have the best right to know.”

“What has he done?” I asked, eagerly.

My question was received in silence, as if the meaning were not clearly apprehended.

“Is he a defaulter?”

“No.” The answer showed surprise at my question.

“Has he betrayed an honorable trust reposed in him by his fellow-men?”

“No, sir; his integrity is without question. In all his public relations he was true as steel to principle.”

“What then? Has he placed any portion of his property beyond the reach of creditors who have just claims upon him?”

“He has given up everything—even to the furniture of his house. Not a dollar has been retained, and he goes forth into the world a ruined man.”

“O no,” said I, speaking out warmly. “Not in any sense a ruined *man.* The merchant may be ruined, but, thank God! the *man* is whole.”

The little company looked at me, for a moment or two, half in surprise.

“The man is all right,” I went on. “Only the scaffolding, on which the workmen stood who were building up his character, has fallen. Erect, calm, noble, half-divine, he stands, now, in the sunshine and in the storm. Around his majestic brow the clouds may gather; upon it the tempests may beat; but he is immoveable in his great integrity.”

Some smiled at my enthusiasm. To them there was nothing of the moral sublime in a ruined merchant. Others looked a little more thoughtful than before; and one said, feebly:

“There is something in that.”

Something in that! I should think there was.

It was the first intelligence I had received of my friend's worldly misfortunes, and it grieved me. In the evening I went to see Jacob Atwood. The windows of the elegant residence where he had lived for years were closed. I looked up at the house—it had a deserted aspect. I rung the bell; no one answered my summons.

I could not repress the feeling of sadness that came over me. The trial must have been severe even for a brave heart like his.

“I must find him,” said I. And I did find him; but far away from the neighborhood where merchant princes had their palace-houses. The house into which he had retired with his family looked small, and mean, and comfortless, in comparison with the elegant abode from which he had removed. I rung and was admitted. The parlor into which I was shown was a small room, and the furniture not much better than we often see in the houses of well-to-do mechanics, or clerks on moderate salaries. But everything was in order, and scrupulously neat.

I had made only a hurried observation, when Mr. Atwood entered. He looked something careworn—his face was paler than when I last saw him, his eye a little duller, his smile less cheerful. The marks of trial and suffering were plainly visible. It would have been almost a miracle had it been otherwise. But he did not exhibit the aspect of a ruined man. He grasped my hand warmly, and said it was pleasant to look into the face of an old friend. I offered him words of sympathy.

“The worst is over,” he answered, with manly cheerfulness, “and nothing is lost which may not be regained. I have found the bottom, know where I am, and there is strength enough left in me to stand up securely amid the rushing waters. The best of all is, my property, which has been apportioned to my creditors, will pay every debt. That gives my heart its lightest pulsations.”

“I heard that you were *ruined,*” said I, as we sat talking together; “but I find that the man is whole. Not a principle invaded by the enemy—not a moral sentiment lost—not a jewel in the crown of honor missing.”

He took my hand, and grasping it hard, looked into my face steadily for some moments. Then, in a subdued voice, he made answer—

“I trust that it is even so, my friend. But there were seasons in the worse than Egyptian night through which I have passed, when the tempter's power seemed about to crush me. For myself I cared little; for my wife and children everything. The thought of seeing them go out from the pleasant home I had provided for them, and step down, far down, to a lower level in the social grade, half distracted me for a time. For them I would have braved everything but dishonor. I could not stoop to that. And so I passed the fiery ordeal, and have come out, I verily believe, a better man. No, no, no, my friend. I am not ruined. I have lost my fortune, but not my integrity.”

And so the man stood firm. It was not in the power of any commercial disaster to ruin him. The storm raged furiously; the waves beat madly against him; but he stood immovable, for his feet were upon the solid rock of honor.

HOW TO BE VALUED.

BY GEORGIANNA HERBERT.

Girls, listen to some advice—you *need it* badly enough—there's not a question of that.

Don't give your beaux a chance to feel *sure* of you. It's bad for *them,* and it's worse for you. There are exceptions, to be sure; there *are* men who may be safely trusted with the knowledge that they are all in all to the heart of the woman they are wooing; but such ones *are deplorably few.* The ardor of most men lasts only so long as lasts their uncertainty. Keep them off, and they'll grow more and more devoted—bring them near, and they'll cool off as fast as a flat iron in the snow. Let them think you care little for them or their love, and they will try hard to become more worthy of your regard. Not flirt; not strive to wound their feelings—we don't mean that—humanity forbid! but don't make yourself *cheap;* just keep your own counsel: and the more hopelessly in love you are the more do you guard the knowledge of that fact from your lover. Keep it down and in, all that you possibly can, till the magic words are said that make you one; then take off the bands, but do it gradually—“grow upon him;” show him by degrees the strength of the passion which he has awakened in your soul.

FEAR OF ENEMIES.

It is a well known fact that most people are often guarded and cautious in their conduct, lest they afford to those persons who make

> “Envy and crooked malice nourishment”

an opportunity to give vent to their venomous feelings; and to so great an extent is this desire to escape slander carried, that, not unfrequently, a certain degree of timidity is manifested. Now, this is going too far in order to stifle calumnious reports of enemies. We conceive that we should always pursue the even tenor of our way regardless of what evil-disposed persons may say. We should live above the fear of cool, calculating, lurking hatred. Or, as the bard of Avon has it:

> ——“We must not stint
> Our necessary actions in the fear
> To 'scape malicious censures.”

It is no disgrace to a man, a society, a state, or a church, to have enemies. Indeed, we view it in the contrary light,—for the good, the great, the noble and the honorable always have met, and, beyond doubt, will continue to meet with opposition—aye, with more than opposition,—bitter hatred, relentless enmity, base and slanderous accusations, and wholesale injurious fabrications. But this is only indicative of the evilness and loathsomeness of your enemies' hearts—it cannot hurt the good, the true and the faithful. For a time, perhaps, your honor may be dimmed, but sure as the Great Searcher of Hearts lives and reigns you will ultimately shine in all the splendor and purity of your real character. Man himself only can assassinate his own reputation.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE.

Nothing is so easily done as to preach and talk of obligations which we are under to do justly and to walk humbly; but it is altogether a different matter to write, and preach, and talk simply by example. And yet, though the former be useful, how much more valuable and effective is the latter? What are those most beautiful essays on the cardinal virtues, compared with the excellence of the life in which these virtues have a living and vital existence? It was not alone the doctrines, advanced with such dignified and persuasive eloquence, by our Saviour, nor the wonderful miracles performed by him, which made the hearts of men follow after him; these were rendered doubly effective by the example which he set at all times, even under the most trying circumstances.

And so it is now, in an humble sense, by mere human hopes. Men may preach and the world will listen, but profit comes by example. A parent, for instance, inculcates gentleness to his children by many sound precepts, but they see him treat his beast in a rude and angry manner, and, in consequence, his instructions are worse than lost, for they are neither heeded nor respected. His example, as a gentle and humane man, would have been sufficient for his children without one word of command. Men are just like children in this respect, and imitate a good example, while mere words, no matter how good and true, without such example, will pass into one ear and out at the other.

PERSEVERANCE.—All the performances of human art at which we look with praise or wonder are i[illegible] stances of the resistless force of perseverance. It is by this that the quarry becomes a pyrami[illegible], and that distant countries are united with car[illegible]als. If a man were to compare the single stroke of a pick-axe, or of one impression with the sp[illegible]de, with the general design and last result, he w[illegible]ould be over-whelmed by the sense of their di[illegible]sproportion; yet those petty operations, incessa[illegible]tly continued, in time surmount the greatest di[illegible]fficulties, and mountains are leveled and ocean[illegible] bounded by the slender force of human being[illegible]

MARRIAGE HYMN.

BY ALICE CARY.

The moon's black tent is up: another hour,
And yet another one will bring the time
To which, through many cares and checks, so slowly,
The golden day did climb.

Take all the books away, and let no noises
Be in the house, while softly I undress
My soul from broideries of disguise, and wait for
My own true love's caress.

The sweetest sound would tire to-night—the dew-drops
Setting the green ears in the corn and wheat,
Would make a discord in the heart attuned to
The bridegroom's coming feet.

Love! blessed Love! if we could hang our walls with
The red coats of a thousand rosy Mays,
Surely they would not shine so well as thou dost,
Lighting our dusty days.

Without thee, what a dim and woful story
Our years would be, oh, excellence sublime:
Slip of the life eternal, brightly growing
In the low soil of time.

THE GAMBLER'S VICTIM.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

"So you would like to know how I first became acquainted with my bride?" said an old friend of mine, by the name of George Carson, whom I met on his bridal tour. "Well, 'thereby hangs a tale;' and as the story is both romantic and tragic, and has a moral, you shall have it.

"Shortly after the 'gold fever' broke out in California," pursued my friend, "I was, as you know, among the first to venture into that then almost unknown region, with a view to amassing wealth, by what I at that time regarded as the very simple process of digging up gold by the bushel. I arrived out there, as you also know, with a select party of friends, and forthwith we set off for the mines. Having fixed upon a locality, we all went to work in high spirits, and continued together about a month; by which time we had made the not very agreeable discovery that 'all is not gold that glitters;' and that, even in the gold regions, there is an immense amount of earth which has nothing in it to glitter.

"Up to the time named, though working industriously, we had not cleared the expenses of living—to say nothing of the expenses of our outward voyage—and consequently we all began to grow querulous and argumentative. One said the gold was here, and another said it was there, and a third that it was nowhere—at least in a sufficient quantity to pay for the trouble of unearthing it. Gold was there, without question, for we had actually seen some—but not in such chunks as we had grappled in our dreams—and though we all felt satisfied that if we had the mines at home, and could get our board for a dollar a week, we might make a respectable living by digging and washing it, we were by no means satisfied we could do the same in California.

"But then, if we could believe the stories of strangers, who occasionally passed through our camp, there were solid veins of solid gold in every place except where we were; and as nearly every man of us had an idea that he knew best how to find solid veins, we divided our party into pairs, and set off 'prospecting' for these wonderful localities. My partner and I, not finding ours very readily, soon began to differ in opinion; and at length he went one way, and I another. After searching for a day or two longer, I fortunately fixed upon a spot which turned out the golden ore to some considerable profit; and I began and continued to work alone for a week—luckily shooting game enough in the vicinity to supply the most pressing wants of nature.

"My solitary camp was none of the pleasantest, however—especially at night; and though now doing well exceedingly, and flattering myself that I should some day be a gentleman of means, it was not with the same regret that Robinson Crusoe discovered the 'tracks in the sand,' that I one day found myself joined by a young and rather delicate-looking stranger, with black hair and eyes, and pale, classical, intellectual features.

"Henry Gordon—for such was his name—was a native of New England, who had come hither to get rich—simply, as he expressed it, that he might put himself on an equality with a young and beautiful heiress, whose mercenary parents were decidedly opposed to their only daughter throwing herself away upon one in indigent circumstances. He was about four-and-twenty years of age, had received a good education, and was refined in manner and sentiment; and the more I saw of him, the better I liked him, and the more I reflected upon the purse-pride of human nature, which could not regard one man, while in the image of his Maker, as good as another, simply because he had not the same amount of this world's dross, or the yellow dust we were so industriously seeking.

"Henry Gordon and I continued together for several weeks—one or the other of us going below to obtain the necessary articles for subsistence, after the game had become so scarce as to require too much of our time in procuring it; and during this period I became greatly attached to him, and deeply sympathized with all his feelings.

"'Shall I ever become rich and get back to my native land?' he would frequently say, in a desponding mood; 'shall I ever look upon my dear Agnes as her equal in wealth? and shall I find her true to the lonely wanderer? She promised to be true—she promised to wait for me—wait years for me, if necessary. I believe she sincerely loved me, and had none of the selfish feelings of her parents; but oh! it is so long to wait! And I am so unhappy here! so miserable! This labor is not fitted to one of my delicate organization; and I sometimes think I shall find my grave in California, and breathe my last breath among strangers, afar from her for whose sake I came hither.'

"I encouraged him as well as I could, and bade him not despair. I told him we were doing well where we were; and though it might take a long time to get rich by digging gold, yet I thought that a sufficient capital might soon be realized, to enable him to start in some kind of business, by which he could make money faster, and easier, and more congenial to his feelings; and as wealth would suddenly be acquired by some, I saw no reason why he and I might not be among the fortunate few.

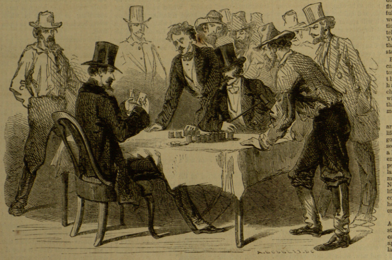
"The hard work of the mines, however, and exposure to the weather—to heats, and damps, and sudden changes, and the irregular fare of the mountains—did not agree with him. Somewhat sickly when he came, he grew paler and more sickly every day; and at last fell quite ill, and was obliged to suspend his labors. I attended him as well as I could; and he recovered so as to be able to leave the mines, but not to resume his occupation there.

"All this time he was much mentally depressed, and continually talked of his Agnes, but in a tone of deeper despondency than ever, and sometimes praying that he might live to return, if only to see her again ere bidding adieu to earth.

"'If I cannot acquire wealth,' he would say—'if I cannot win her—if we cannot unitedly pass through the vale of life together—then the next happiness I pray for, is, that I may die in her native clime, and be buried where she may sometimes look upon my solitary grave!'

"At last, after thanking me, with tearful eyes, for all the kindness I had shown to him, he bade me farewell; and taking with him his hardly-earned gold, he set off for San Francisco.

"Months passed on, and I continued among the mountains, changing my locality from time to time, and on the whole meeting with very fair success, till the rainy season set in; when, flattering myself that, with the capital I now had, I could do better in some more congenial pursuit, I set off for San Francisco also.



"Shortly after my arrival there, as I was passing down the principal street, which then consisted of mere shanties and booths, a familiar voice hailed me; and, as I turned around, Henry Gordon bounded up and grasped me by the hand.

"'My dear fellow,' he said, 'I am so delighted to see you! for I had begun to fear that you had got sick and perished among the mines. But you are looking remarkably well, and I hope you have been prosperous according to your deserts!'

"I replied that I had no reason to complain, and that it gave me great pleasure to be able to congratulate him in return upon his healthy appearance.

"'Yes,' he rejoined, 'I am better than ever, in every way—mentally, physically, and pecuniarily. I have got my health, my energies, and my hopes, and am now on the fair road to fortune and happiness. I came down here with the little means I had, set quickly to work in a small way, buying and selling, and, being favored by fortune, am now worth my thousands. Do you see that large shanty yonder?' pointing down the street. 'Well, that and all it contains is mime. Come, my friend, you shall make your home with me; and if you wish to start in business, I will put you in the way to make a fortune.'

"'And what of Agnes?' said I, as I accompanied him to his new business home, where I found a couple of clerks busy in disposing of goods at rates which I fancied might make any man wealthy in a very short time.

"'Ah! good news of her!' he said, with sparkling eyes; 'better news than I had hoped; for I have received a letter from her, in reply to mine, in which she states that her father has been unfortunate in business, and is now reduced to want. Carson, this is glorious news to me! and it will be the proudest and happiest day of my life, when I shall once more reach my native land, and take her hand, and assure her mercenery parents that now the poor outcast can give her wealth beyond their wildest dreams of wealth! Oh, George, I must get rich—very rich! My ambition now aspires to the position of a millionaire, that I may build a palace for my Agnes, and lord it over the purse-proud fools who despised me in my day of poverty, and thought me beneath them, merely because I had not the talisman I now possess! Oh, it will be a glorious triumph for Agnes and me!'

"But have a care, Gordon,' returned I, 'do not seek too much! Remember the fable of the golden eggs!'

"'Oh, I will be cautious, and yet I will be bold!' he rejoined, with spirit and pride. 'Aladdin's lamp is in my hand! and I will grow rich—very rich! and yet a year from this shall see me homeward bound! Come, let us crack a bottle of wine together, and drink a toast to my glorious Agnes! After that we will talk over your prospects; for you must grow rich also, and go back with me, and enjoy my triumph! You were my first and only friend here,' he added, with faltering voice and tearful eyes; 'and, save Agnes, you shall be first in my heart there, for Henry Gordon is one who can never forget a friend.'

"I remained in San Francisco several months, making my home with Gordon, and entering into various speculations, some of which proved successful, and some otherwise; so that, at the end of the period named, I found, on summing up, I had come out about even—the only money I had really made being what I had dug from the earth.

"He, however, had been more prosperous, for, like the fabled Midas, everything he touched seemed turned to gold. In consequence of this repeated good fortune he grew more sanguine, and venturesome to a degree that startled me, for I was afraid some one unlucky venture might ruin him. But whenever I warned him he laughed at my fears, and frequently replied—

"'Have I not often told you that I hold the lamp of Aladdin?'

"Another thing gave me not a little uneasiness: the more he acquired, the more he seemed to want; and though he now possessed far beyond what at first his most sanguine hopes had told him he could obtain, yet he seemed as far as ever from arriving at the ultimate of his desires; and eager to gain, by any and every means, he began to resort to the gambling hells, which now loomed thickly up around us, with the blasting and desolating power of the deadly upas, and there he staked largely and excitedly, and rode, as it seemed, a triumphant conqueror even over the very fates themselves.

"Finding I had not bettered my condition in the settlement, I finally resolved upon a return to the mines; and with many an earnest word of caution to my now sanguine friend, I took leave of him. As my story, however, relates more directly to him than myself, I pass over the interval of my absence, which was several months.

"On my return to town, I sought the quarters of Henry Gordon with no little anxiety. I found his place of business looking less thriving than usual; but he himself, as I had feared, was not there. On my inquiring for him, I was directed to a large and magnificent saloon—or golden-paved hell—which had of late become his constant resort.

"I did not seek him there immediately—for I had business which took me another way; but the following evening, observing the place in question brilliantly lighted up, I ventured in; and there, one among a large crowd which surrounded a faro bank, I discovered my friend, betting heavily, and all eyes turned upon him. He stood in such a position that the light shone clear and full upon his features; and it was with a start of surprise, and a pang of sorrow, that I now looked upon his pale, almost ghastly face, with its compressed lips, knitted brows, and eager, fiery eyes, which he kept fixed upon the cards in the hands of the dealer. His fortune had turned—I could see that plainly; and with the wild, maddened desperation of one conscious of the fact—and that, if he could not recover, by a bold stroke, what he had lost, he was a ruined man—he was now staking his all upon what proved literally to be the chance of life and death.

"Spell-bound by his singular appearance, I stood, for a few minutes, gazing sadly upon his altered countenance, and secretly cursing the vice which had become his bane. At length, just as I was about to push forward to him, if possible to drag him away from his doom, he staggered back, and pressed his convulsively-working fingers to his forehead, while large beads of perspiration gathered upon his agonized features. The next moment I heard him exclaim, in a voice of despair, whose tones seem yet to ring in my ears:

"'Oh, my God! I am a ruined man!'

"The crowd made way for him to pass—a few with looks of compassion, but more with smiles of derision—for these were the men who had sought his ruin, and could glory in their success.

"I pushed eagerly forward, and grasped his hand.

"'My dear fellow,' said I, 'come with me.'

"At first he did not recognize me, but threw me from him with violence, saying:

"'Begone, fiend! I am ruined already—what more would you have?'

"'Henry,' returned I, soothingly, "do you not know your friend, George Carson?'

"He swept his fingers quickly across his eyes, as if brushing away a mist, and replied, in a hollow, agonized voice:

"'George Carson, is this you! I thought it was another—I took you for the fiend in human shape who first tempted me to my destruction! George,' he pursued, hurriedly, grasping my arm, and dragging me apart from the crowd—'George, I am a ruined man—ruined for this world and the next! I have lost all—*all*—everything!—fortune—hope—happiness—my Agnes!'

"'But you can easily retrieve all, Henry, if you will but keep away from these dens of iniquity.'

"'No! no!' he somewhat wildly rejoined; 'it is too late! too late! too late! George, I am glad you are here. I wanted to see a friend, but never expected to again. Here—take this ring—and if you ever return to the States, seek out Agnes Waltham, and tell her it came from me, with my blessing!'

"'What means this strange language, Henry?' said I, beginning to grow alarmed: 'surely you will take it back yourself?'

"'I may not live,' he muttered, turning aside his face. 'Promise me, if I do not live, and you ever return, you will seek out Agnes, and give her that ring, with my blessing!—promise me, George Carson, in God's holy name!'

"'I do, Henry—I solemnly promise! But surely you have some covert meaning to these strange words! Come! you must come with me! I will not leave you for a single moment, till you are calmer and more like yourself.'

"'But you have promised me, George, have you not? sworn to me, if anything *should* happen, that you will give that ring to Agnes, with my blessing?'

"'I have promised, Henry—I have sworn. So come! let us leave this scene of vice.'

"'One moment!' he said; and turning quickly on his heel, he pushed eagerly into the crowd which had again closed around the faro bank.

"Almost the next moment I was startled by the report of a pistol, followed by exclamations of horror; and with a presentiment of the worst, I bounded forward, just in time to see them raising poor Henry Gordon from the table, upon which he had fallen—shot through the brain by his own hand—literally the gambler's victim—sacrificed on the very altar of unholy desires!

"I kept my promise," concluded my friend, "and gave the ring to Agnes Waltham—and another on her wedding day—for the first love of Henry Gordon is now the wife of him who rejoiced in his prosperity, grieved over his fatal vice, and bitterly mourned his untimely end."

◆

"FICKLE MAN."

There is, generally speaking, so much in a man's nature that is incomprehensible to a woman, that it is always a daring task for her to weigh his actions, or to attempt the divination of his feelings. His love is seldom her love; his faith is not her faith; his life is not her life—only in moments of existence which shine out briefly and brightly in the dark expanse of memory, like stars on the purple firmament, does it seem that love and sympathy can raise the curtain, and let one soul perceive the other. For if woman knows not man, neither can he, except in rarest instances, regulate the spring of her faults, or discover the fountain of her virtues.

◆

He that lends an easy and credulous ear to calumny, is either a man of very ill morals, or has no more sense and understanding than a child.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

☞ *All the back numbers of the* Ledger, *from June 7th*, 1856, *up to the present date, can be had at our office, in quantities or by the single copy.*

Nellie and Cora.—It is improper for young ladies to do anything contrary to their fathers' orders; but a girl may ask a gentleman to eat a philopœna with her, that is, if she honestly intends to pay in case she should lose. It is not customary or proper for a girl to take her lover's arm while promenading in the street, in the daytime, unless they are engaged.

A School-Girl.—We do not consider the first matter to which you refer of the slightest consequence. As to the second, you should be influenced by the expressed wishes of your friends.

Mary Carlton.—You would doubtless be profited by the careful reading of the works you mention. We cannot tell their cost. You can ascertain that at any bookstore.

Benjamin.—You can try a depilatory to "remove the superfluous hair," if you choose, but you will probably throw away your money.

Lizzie.—If you are so tired of a life of *de*pendence, go to work and see how you like a life of *inde*pendence. You will, perhaps, find the latter much the most enjoyable. Nothing sweetens life more than the consciousness of honestly earning one's own living.

Ellengman.—According to your statement of the case, you should apologize to the lady.

E., Detroit.—You must be touched with insanity to contemplate such a step. Tell your husband what the proposition was, and let him attend to the matter.

Edgar.—Yes. A writer can, of course, use obsolete words if he chooses to do so, and so can he use very objectionable words and phrases, and express improper ideas if he chooses to do so; but he will not be countenanced by the intelligent and the good in the use of either the one or the other. The plainest, simplest, and best understood words and modes of speech should be preferred. Daniel Webster used to tell a story that illustrates this fact. He said that when quite a young man he was invited to deliver a Fourth-of-July oration, and embraced the opportunity to show off all the rhetoric, and fine phrases, and high-sounding expressions, he could press into his service. The oration was "printed by request," and a sensible editor getting hold of it, criticised it severely, and wound up by saying that it was "*full of emptiness.*" "Thereupon," said Mr. Webster, "I set about reading the oration over carefully, and when I had done so I fully agreed with the out-spoken editor; it was 'full of emptiness;' and I was so disgusted with that style of composition that I at once and forever abandoned it. And I think that much of whatever success I have met with through life in my arguments before courts and juries, and especially the latter, has been owing to the determination which I then formed, and have since carefully carried out, always to use the plainest and simplest words and modes of speech." This testimony in favor of plainness and simplicity of speech, coming as it does from one of the most eminent orators and most powerful advocates that have ever spoken the English language, is worthy the serious consideration not only of our correspondent, but of every speaker and writer in the land.

Kate Varney wants our advice in the following predicament: She was engaged to a young man whom she dearly loved, and still loves, but whom she discarded on account of being persuaded that he was a person of bad character—the testimony upon which she made up her decision, being very strong, direct, and conclusive. Recently, however, facts have transpired that show her lover to have been the victim of an artfully-planned conspiracy. It is now demonstrated that he was entirely innocent of the damaging charges made against him, and our correspondent is overwhelmed with grief and remorse because she permitted herself to be influenced by them. She wants to be reconciled to her lover, but does not know how to compass such a result. We should think she would be puzzled in such an emergency. She has but one course to pursue, and that is frankly to state the case and ask her old lover to forgive her abandonment of him. It is, of course, asking a good deal of a man to marry a woman who has given such a signal lack of confidence in him at a time when he most needed sympathy. And furthermore, Kate, should he agree to overlook this unfortunate occurrence, it would be apt to annoy you both, and especially him, during all your wedded life, unless he is a man of the very best and noblest nature. It is a sad piece of business.

A Boarder says that, in the house in which he lives, there are four gentlemen and three lady boarders; that on a recent occasion they were all assembled in the parlor, when "one of the ladies put off her shoes right before them all." This, it seems, greatly scandalized the sensitive gentlemen, one of whom told the lady that she must slip on her shoes again, or leave the room. The lady replied that she should do neither, and "one of the other ladies sustained her in this audacious position." The result is, that this once happy family is all by the ears, cannot agree as to who should begin to make amends, and advice is implored. Our first impression was, that people who are capable of getting at variance about such a ridiculous matter are unworthy of attention; but, after all, this boarding-house strife is a fair sample of most of the quarrels, great and small, that have ever annoyed families, set neighborhoods by the ears, or convulsed nations. There is nothing very outrageous or improper in a lady's quietly slipping her slippers off of her feet in the parlor, no matter who is present. Sometimes a pain in the feet compels her to do so, and it is very ungentlemanly for a man to notice such an action in any way, and positively outrageous in him to speak of it.

Patriot wants to know what we think of Washington, and whether "he was the greatest man of the Revolution or not." Undoubtedly he was. He was the greatest in those qualities (such as self-possession, fortitude, faith in himself and his cause, honesty of purpose, &c.,) which were necessary in the commander-in-chief of the revolutionary forces. When nearly everybody else in the country despaired, Washington's faith in the success of the cause was unshaken. When the resources of the country seemed exhausted he could find a means of securing supplies and rekindling the wavering zeal of the soldiers. A wise and good man is more useful to a cause or a country, and better deserving of lasting love and veneration, than a great one, or a genius, and Washington was pre-eminently wise and good. Napoleon was a far greater man and genius than Washington; but had Napoleon been in Washington's place, though he would have astonished the world by his splendid military achievements, he would have *wrecked the cause* by his extravagance, his selfishness, and his injustice.

Honora Paule.—Your question is too general in its nature to admit of the specific answer which you ask for. You ask, "Should a wife always stand by her husband in adversity, even though he should be convicted of murder?" We can only reply, *That depends upon circumstances.* There can be no general rule broad enough to cover all cases. Each case must be judged of separately and independently, and determined upon its own merits. In some instances it would be right for a wife to stand by her husband after his conviction for murder, and in others it would not be right for her to do so. Much would depend upon a wife's own feelings and convictions upon the subject. As a general thing, if she felt disposed to stand by her husband to the last, however aggravated his crimes, nobody would be apt to blame her for doing so, as there is something so touching and sacred in the exhibition of wifely devotion under such circumstances, that calumny stands abashed, and the tongues of censorious gossips are silenced.

A Cincinnati Girl wants to know if we would help her to get a husband by publishing her "card" in the Ledger, as she is now over twenty-five, has never had an offer, though she is well-off and good-looking, and has a great horror of growing old in single blessedness. We must decline assisting this young lady in her matrimonial ventures. If she is really "well-off," as she claims to be, she should continue so, and not run the risk of getting a husband who would mar her present well-being.

Caroline.—You had better consult some skillful and marriageable young physician, who would consider your heart and hand a sufficient compensation for his professional services.

Isabel Carlton says she adopts this signature because she thinks her case resembles that of the heroine of our lately published story of "The Patriot Pioneer; or, *The Maid of the War-Path.*" As there was a fierce and adverse fate ever at work to compass the ruin of the "maiden of the war-path," so is there in the case of our correspondent. She has two suitors; one young and good-looking, but impetuous and jealous, the other elderly, good-tempered, frank and affectionate. She prefers the latter, and would marry him. But alas! there are "Bradbrooks," old and young, who persecute her, and thwart her wishes, and mar her happiness, as Guy and Nathan Bradbrook did in the case of the Isabel Carlton of the story above mentioned. Her relatives are opposed to her marrying anybody, and insist on her remaining single, in order that she may continue to serve them in the capacity of upper servant, governess and stewardess. The "elderly lover," who is so mild and affecate, is made to suffer much annoyance at their hands and tongues; they always speak of him as "the old man," the "old bachelor," the "gray gallant," "Cupid's grandfather," and in other like offensive and unjust modes of speech annoy and scandalize him. Our correspondent is very unhappy, and don't know what to do. If she goes on as at present, she will be miserable; if she marries the man of her choice, she will incur the enmity of all her relatives, and that of her jealous and fiery young lover. "What then," she asks—"What *shall* I do?" You should consult your own interest and happiness. If you would be happier married, marry. Never mind what your relatives say. They will be very good friends after your marriage, as soon as the first feelings of anger shall have worn off. Marry the "affectionate elderly lover."

Albert Heywood says there is an arithmetical problem which has been puzzling himself and neighbors for a long time, as none of them can solve it, and he wants us to give them a solution of it. The problem is this, namely: Two men were engaged to dig a ditch, one hundred yards in length, for which they were to have fifty dollars. As the earth at one end of the ditch was harder than that at the other end, the man who had the hard part to excavate was paid one-fourth more a yard than his fellow-laborer. On coming to settle with them, it was found that the amount of money each had earned was equal, and so each was paid twenty-five dollars. The question is, how much did each receive a yard? and how many yards did each dig? Any smart boy of twelve should be able to "do that sum." The man who dug the hard end of the ditch received fifty-six cents and one-fourth of a cent (56 1-4) a yard, and dug forty-four yards and four-ninths of a yard. The other received forty-five cents a yard, and dug fifty-five yards and five-ninths of a yard.

Peter.—When a person whom you wish to treat with marked respect and deference indicates to you that you are to precede him into a carriage, or in any other way, you should at once do so, without offering to give him the precedence. This is one of the last points of etiquette which many people learn, and some never learn it. The theory is that the superior is to take the lead, and that you are to respond to his wishes at once, without the slightest questioning of them, and without attempting to control even with a rein of courtesy his movements. When Louis XIV. wished to test the perfection of a man's good breeding, he would ask him to ride with him. On approaching the carriage, the monarch would sign to his companion to enter it first; the thorough-bred gentleman would of course enter the carriage at once, while he who was not finished in respect to good-breeding, would draw back, and say, "After your majesty," or make some equivalent observation.

W. F.—You no doubt thought that you were "stating the case in exact accordance with the strictest truth;" but do you not know that it is impossible for a man who believes himself to have been outrageously wronged, to state the circumstances in exact accordance with the strictest truth? A *very* just man, who has great control of his feelings, might give the words and state the visible facts of such a case; but he could not give the looks, tones and sentiments—the *moral* and *spiritual* phases of the affair, which would be necessary to clothe his *skeleton* statement with flesh and blood, and make it a living and truthful exhibition of the occurrences attempted to be set forth. You did not allow your adversary any rights at all. That was a great error; it is difficult to place a man in a position where he has not *some* rights. Let the issue of your attempt teach you to be more charitable towards your enemies in future.

Juliet requests us to 'define love so she can understand it"—a most difficult thing for any one to do. No person can understand what love, fear, hatred, or any other passion really is, without experiencing it, any more than one can understand the sensation produced by a burn without being burnt. Love signifies the state of holding a person dear. Love between relatives, such, for instance, as that of a mother for her child, seems to be instinctive. Love between friends may be defined as ardent friendship, springing from good will and esteem. But let Juliet "fall in love," and she will know more about the *substance* of the matter than we could *tell* her in a volume.

Salamander wants to know whether or not a young man, "twenty-six years of age," who has been engaged to a young lady of wealthy parentage for several months, would be justified in breaking the engagement now that her father has failed, and she has become poor? No. A young man "of the age of twenty-six years," or of any other age, would be a miserable wretch to do so, but his seriously putting such a question, which indicates that he has been pondering over the matter, would be sufficient reason for the young lady's breaking off the engagement.

Samuel.—Stick to your present course of studying evenings, attending church on the Sabbath, and frequenting only the society of the virtuous and good. No matter how much your fellow clerks ridicule and jeer at you, go ahead in the path you have chosen. It will lead to wealth, distinction, and happiness, while the course pursued by your young friends will ultimately lead to loss of health and character, to poverty and disgrace in life, and to an unhonored grave. Your conscientious and manly tone, as expressed in your letter, did our heart good. We wish there were more young men like you.

Young Husband.—Of course you should take care of the baby while your wife takes her meals, if you have no servant girl. The "baby" *must* be taken care of, and if "it will not do to fetch it to the table," as you say, then you and your wife must take care of it in turn, one taking it while the other eats. Such a matter should be governed by the law of love. We think that a "young husband," who is capable of selfishly making trouble about such a domestic trifle, will be an intolerable tyrant at home long before his hair is silvered.

Nonplussed.—If your lover belongs to any secret society to which you feel an irreconcilable aversion, and his meetings with which occasion you very great pain and discomfort, we should advise you not to marry him, unless he is quite willing to break off his connection with such society. A *reluctant* consent *wrung from him* will not be enough, as in that case he would always feel much dissatisfaction, which might ultimately develop into an estrangement of his affection from you.

Lady, (Baltimore.)—We would not be prevailed upon by any amount of pecuniary or other influence which we can imagine to make the Ledger a medium for persons to communicate with each other who wish publicly to make known their matrimonial desires. We consider the practice of advertising for husbands and wives a most unrefined and vulgar one; and it seems to us that it would be impossible for a person of proper delicacy and modesty to engage in it.

Sarah.—There would be nothing improper in exchanging daguerreotypes with the gentleman in question, inasmuch as your parents know and esteem him. It would be exhibiting nothing more than due respect to your parents, however, to ask their advice in the matter. In fact, young people should always speak to their parents about such matters.

George and Edward.—The price of land in Iowa and Wisconsin varies from $1,25 an acre to $100 or more a foot, according to its locality. The present would be a good time to buy. By traveling extensively, and exercising due caution, many excellent bargains in lands could now be made in either of the States mentioned.

Builder.—We should not advise any one to invest their funds in "Building Societies." They *may* be very safe, good, and profitable institutions; but we have never known any one to be satisfied with the result of his experiments in investing money in them.

D. N. S.—You are mistaken, and if you persist in your determination, you will get into a serious scrape. It is a grave misdemeanor to disturb a religious meeting, as you will soon discover, if you attempt to put in execution the plan referred to in your letter.

Gretan.—Yes. You can have your life insurance made payable to your wife in case of your death, and then, if you keep the premium paid up, it will be a guaranty against the utter poverty of her and your children, when deprived of your support.

Joseph.—You are unsophisticated, Joseph. The girl undoubtedly likes you a good deal, and all her pertness and sauciness is but assumed. Take her advice and "keep away" for awhile, and she will soon change her tactics.

Sister-in-law.—We sympathize with the other side. When people visit poor relatives they should not act as though they were stopping at a hotel, but should be very careful to render themselves as little burdensome as possible.

E. P. R.—Unless you have conclusive proof, you should not commence such an action. Should you fail, your adversary could proceed against you for a malicious prosecution, and might recover heavy damages against you.

An Amateur.—By inquiring at the music stores you can probably ascertain the address of some good "restorer of old violins," who would doctor your fiddles to your satisfaction.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*